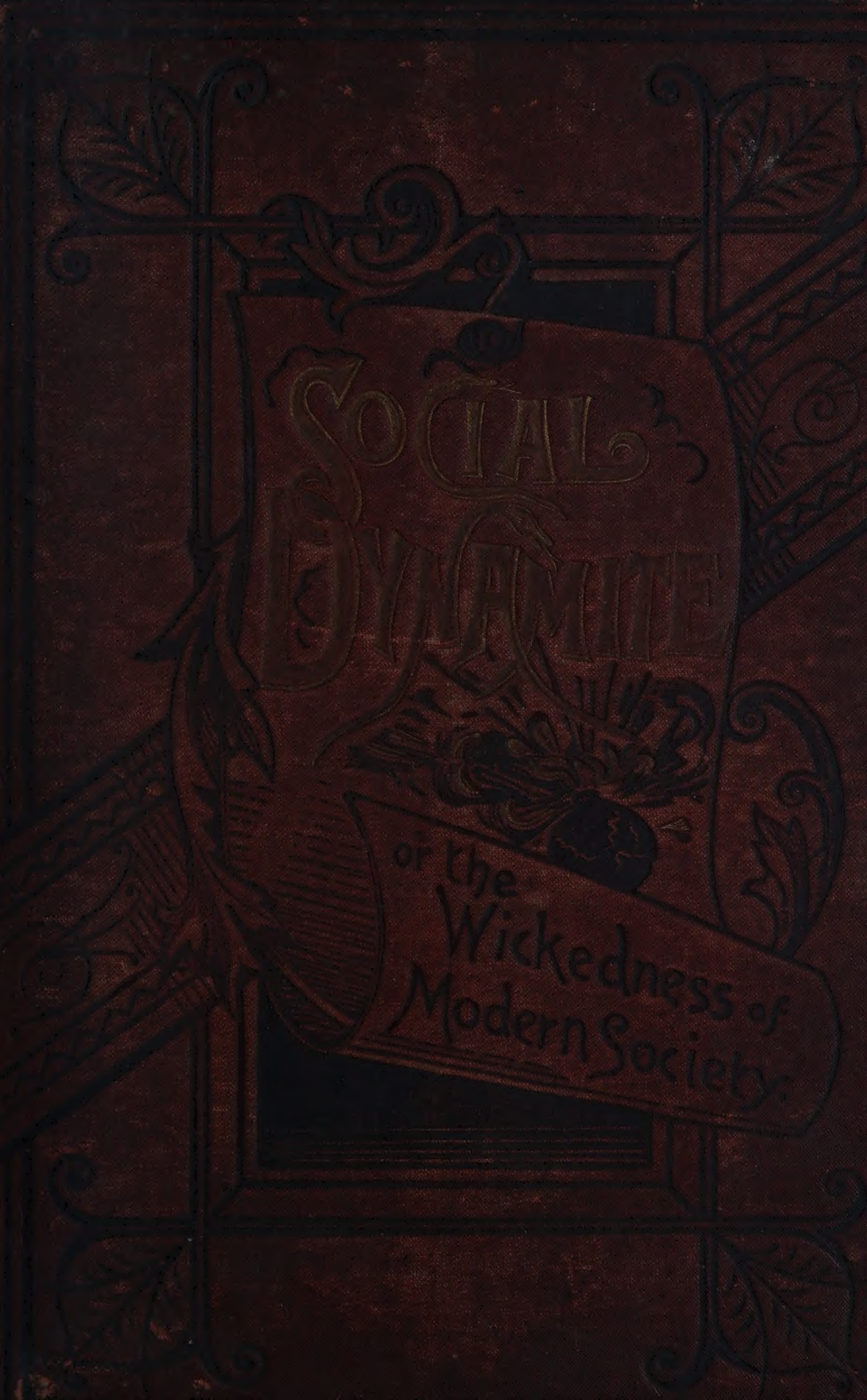

SOCIAL DYNAMITE

or the Wickedness of Modern Society.

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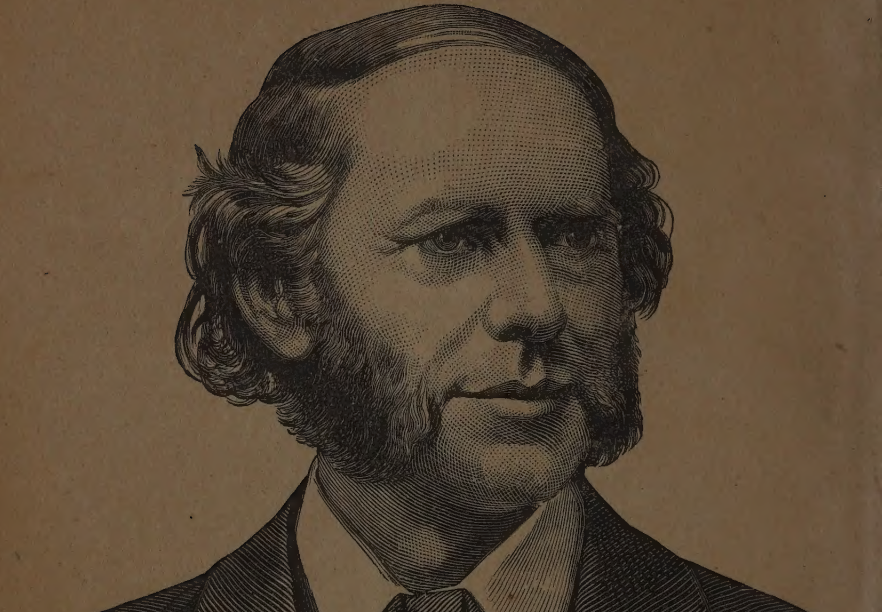

Yours
T. De Witt Talmage

SOCIAL DYNAMITE;

OR, THE

Wickedness of Modern Society

FROM THE DISCOURSES OF

T. DEWITT TALMAGE, D. D.

Author of "Masque Torn Off;" "Live Coals;" "Foes of Society;"
"Traps for Men;" "Night Sides of City Life;" "Sports
that Kill;" "Crumbs Swept Up," Etc.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND COLLATION BY

FRANCES P. VAN NORSTRAND, A. B.

Author "Life's Ideal;" "Sunshine," Etc

ILLUSTRATED.

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PREFACE.

Dr. Talmage, in many respects, stands at the head of American pulpit orators, and none excel him in dramatic force. He is one of the few who dares lift his voice against the wickedness of modern society wherever found, sparing neither friend nor foe, rich nor poor. In a clarion voice he sounds a note of warning, and designates the only way to escape the pits of darkness and social and moral ruin.

A fearless antagonist to all forms of sin; he cares more for cleaving a helmet than for showing the jewels on the handle of his weapon. Blows are what he gives. He does not know how to soften a denunciation or kid-glove a lie, cheat or sham. Strong in imagination, happy in word-painting, he arrays the most common truths in all the freshness of new discoveries, and all the glow of living reality. To this is added a quick insight into human nature, and the foibles, vices and iniquities of the present day. The Gospel is presented by him as the only remedy for human corruption. In all he says and does he is swayed by an over-mastering Christian earnestness.

America is given a proud place among the nations of the earth; at the same time things are pointed outer which, if they are not suppressed, will bring disaster, upon the country. Municipal law, it is shown, will be a dead letter, and political reform impossible, so long as Christains are apathetic and politically negligent, and fail to aid those in authority by personally urging reform and standing by it in the name of Christ.

This work contains nearly fifty chapters, on as many different subjects; they are, from beginning to end, of peculiar interest to every American, and stamped with the extraordinary individuality of this remarkable man. Every page burns with an eloquent entreaty for a better and purer life, and possesses an intense, soul-absorbing interest to all who desire the advancement and higher development of the human race.

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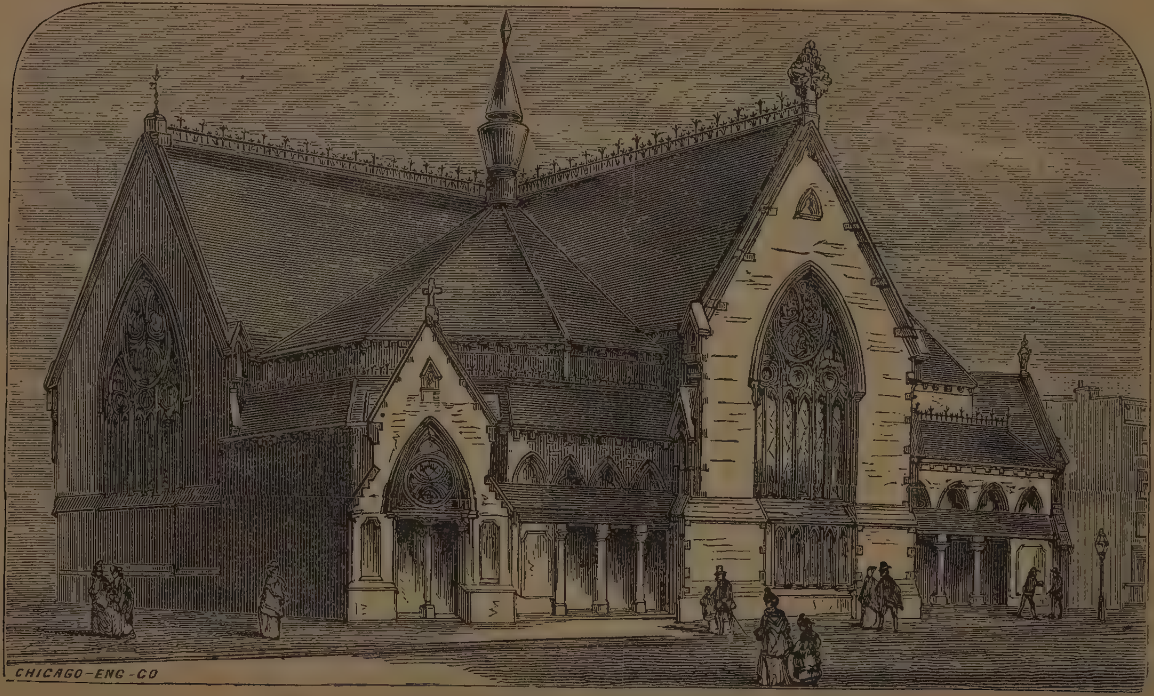
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THOMAS DEWITT TALMAGE, D.D.

THOMAS DEWITT TALMAGE was born in Boundbrook, Somerset County, N. J., in the year 1832. His father was a farmer, of much vigor and consistency of character; his mother a woman of noted energy, hopefulness and equanimity. Their differences in character, blended in a common life, rendered their home one of harmony, consecration, benignance and cheerfulness.

The late David T. Talmage, who attained the remarkable age of eighty-three years, possessed almost phenomenal judgment and firmness, uniting those traits which attain their highest expression under American institutions, constant communion with nature, habits of self-support and self-reflection, and a thorough trust in God. Throughout his long career he came to be the natural counselor, leader and exemplar to the people among whom he lived, in matters alike secular and religious; nor was a fair degree of official distinction denied him. The relation, in which he stands to the career of his most eminent son, is summed up when it is stated that he was a man of blameless life, profound discretion, much intelligence, unaffected gentleness, and a richness of spiritual experience which made his life an exponent of the powers of the world to come. His wife, Catharine Talmage, was, in every respect, a helpmeet for her husband. Peculiar strength of character marked him. Peculiar sweetness of character distinguished her. She diffused throughout her family the aroma of a meek and quiet spirit. Her gentle humanities were ever dispensed within the circle of her influence. Where sickness came, she preceded the physician; where sorrow came, the preacher of consolation arriving found her there before him. "Her life was not a psalm," but an offertory. One afternoon, in each week, she and five of her neighbors were wont to meet, to pray for the salvation of their households. Nobody knew why these mothers met, there was a sort of mystery about it. They met to pray for their children; they prayed until they were all converted.

From boyhood and throughout his youth, DeWitt, always inclining toward a professional career, purposed to make that profession the law. Not ignoring that manifestation, nor abating a job of their own desire for and confidence in a contrary result, his parents, as a first requisite to his success in any calling determined to endow him with the ever-available, indispensable capital of a thorough education. From the first he was remarkable for enthusiasm in mental labor; for an audacious devotion to those branches of it, for which he felt the most fondness and fitness; for a vocabulary of extreme simplicity, directness and brevity; for powers of memory and description of the highest order; for a habit of divining his way to right conclusions without the tardy processes of proof; for a tendency to reach the heart through illustrations, rather than to harrow the head with arguments; for an entire absence of self-consciousness; and for a disposition of sweetness and light, and ideal honorableness. And yet New Jersey never contained a merrier, or more mischievous lad, one more active in field, or more roguish in school.

Prepared by the usual course of study for college, Mr. Talmage chose for his *alma mater* the University of New York. He passed through that excellent institution, not with the maximum of merit marking men who are the chief figures on examination days, and ciphers ever after to the end of the chapter. But his tropical imagination, the confidential relationship established between himself and human nature, his prodigious but simple powers of expression, his possession of the dramatic in high degree in thought and manner, and his inherent love for the pure in morals, and for the ideally excellent in life, rendered him the distinguishing expectation and feature of class and composition days. As a *belle-lettre* scholar, a professor of the university says, Mr. Talmage has had no equal in all the students who have ever graduated from that institution. On gradution day, when he delivered his speech at Niblo's Garden, the effect was electric and overwhelming; the most part of the audience rising to their feet, under the spell of his brilliant, original, mirthful, and pathetic utterances. Journalist, poet, pleader, politician, or reformer he might become, and to any of these roles were his powers signally adapted. In favor of his becoming a preacher were the prayers of his parents, and the fact that his abilities would attain their highest usefulness and strength in the advocacy of eternal and fundamental, not temporary and tentative truths. The purpose of the Deity was soon made manifest, and found to be ordered in consonance with the highest human hopes in the case.

He became a Christian before he was twenty and though his earliest preference was the law, the study of which he pursued for a year after his graduation, a voice of unrest "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel," turned his steps toward the ministry, and he entered the New Brunswick Theological Seminary preparatory thereto. The step was extremely gratifying to his parents, although they had not urged the course. He was plainly led by the Lord, and not man. The faculties which would have made him one of the greatest jury advocates of the age, thus were preserved for the saving of the souls of men, and "He leadeth me" was written in living letters of light over the entrance to his life work.

As his destiny and powers came to manifestation in Brooklyn, his pastoral life prior to that was but a preparation for it, and obviously laid the foundation for, and paved the path to his present great work. At Belleville, N. J., on the beautiful Passaic, Mr. Talmage first tasted the sweetness of commending Christ to men. That cultivated country congregation was an admirable school. It was there that young Talmage not only "became introduced to himself," but it was also there that he bid "a last farewell" to every resolution except to count himself as "dirt and accursed" if he knew anything among them save Christ and him crucified. There he formed strong friendships, which still remain.

By natural promotion three years at Syracuse succeeded three at Belleville. That cultivated, critical city furnished Mr. Talmage the value of an audience in which professional men were predominant in influence. His preaching there grew tonic and free. As Mr. Pitt advised a young friend, he "risked himself." The church grew from few to many from a state of coma to athletic life. The preacher learned to go to school to humanity and his own heart. The lessons they taught him agreed with what was boldest and most compelling in the spirit of the revealed word. Those whose claims were sacred to him found the saline climate of Syracuse a cause of unhealth. Otherwise it is likely that that most delightful region in the United States—Central New York—for men of letters who equally love nature and culture, would have been the home of Mr. Talmage for life.

The next seven years of Mr. Talmage's life were spent in Philadelphia. There his powers became "set." He learned what it was he could best do. He had the courage of his consciousness and he did it. Previously he might have felt it incumbent on him to give to pulpit traditions the homage of compliance—though at Syracuse "the more excellent way," any man's *own* way, so that he have the divining gift of genius and the nature a-tune to all high sympathies and purposes—had in glimpses come to him. He realized that it was his duty and mission in the world to make *it* hear the gospel. The church was not to him in numbers a select few, in organization a monopoly. It was meant to be the conqueror and transformer of the world. For seven years he wrought with much success on this theory, all the time realizing that his plans could come to fullness only under conditions that enabled him to build from the bottom up an organization which could get nearer to the masses and which would have no precedents to be afraid of as ghosts in its path. Hence he ceased from being the leading preacher in Philadelphia to become in Brooklyn the leading preacher in the world.

His work there is known to all our readers. It began in a cramped brick rectangle, capable of holding twelve hundred, and he came to it on "the call" of nineteen. In less than two years that was exchanged for an iron structure with raised seats, the interior curved like a horse-shoe, the pulpit a platform bridging the ends. That held three thousand persons. It lasted just long enough to revolutionize church architecture in cities into harmony with common sense. Then it burnt up, that from its ashes the present stately and most sensible structure might rise. Gothic, of brick and stone, cathedral-like above, amphitheater-like below, it holds five thousand as easily as one person, and all can hear and see equally well.

Mr. Talmage is everywhere known as a lecturer, and the highest prices are paid for his services; but he declines fifty invitations where he accepts one. He will for two hours keep his audience in the lecture hall in excitement going from tenderest pathos to the most boisterous and rollicksome mirth. His resources of mimicry are boundless. He is a person above medium height, has a deep blue eye and sandy complexion. His face, in parlor as well as in pulpit, is mobile to the last degree—expressive of not only the difference between the grandest emotions of the heart, but of the most delicate shades of feeling. He has a warmth of manner and a rush of conversational power which make young and old immediately at home with him. In private life he has more the appearance of an easy, off-hand merchant than of a clergyman. His dress there, as indeed in the pulpit, is exceedingly plain, but always neat and gentlemanly.

Previous to his visit to Europe, in the Summer of 1885, he had declined all invitations to preach or lecture, as he needed rest, but some friendly pressure induced him to change his determination. The sermon he preached in London was delivered in the celebrated Wesleyan Chapel, behind which is the grave of John Wesley, and in front of which is Bunhill burial ground, where lie the bones of John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, Daniel DeFoe and Horne Tooke. The preacher referred in his sermon to this hallowed ground. The chapel was crowded to suffocation. During the indoor services several thousand people stood in the front graveyard and in the street, impeding travel, and awaiting Dr. Talmage outside. After the regular service he came into the church porch and addressed the multitude in full voice, and then with a smiling face gave out a stirring hymn, after singing which the populace made the policemen happy by again freeing the thoroughfare.

Later in the season he preached in the United Presbyterian Synod Hall, Edinburgh, the spacious building was filled in every part, all the passages and some of the windows even being occupied. For want of room hundreds were turned away disappointed. No other preacher ever addressed so many constantly. Types give him three continents for a church and the English-speaking world for a congregation.

During the years in which he has been preaching Mr. Talmage has not only received the criticism of the world, but often its misrepresentations; nor do many men escape them, particularly if they are working for God and the church. But there is one falsehood told in connection with his life which invades the sanctity of his home, and deserves only to be mentioned that it may denied.

It has been stated over and over again in private circles, and in newspapers hinted, until tens of thousands of people have heard the report that some years ago Mr. Talmage went sailing on the Schuylkill river with his wife and her sister; that the boat capsized, and that he, having the opportunity of saving one, let his wife drown, saved her sister, then married her within sixty days. All of which is a lie made out of whole cloth. One morning Mr. Talmage's sister, Sarah Talmage Whiteknack, and her daughter, who were visiting him, with his wife, daughter and himself started for Fairmount Park. Having just moved to Philadelphia, they were ignorant of the topography of the suburbs. Passing by the river, they proposed a row, hired a boat and, not knowing anything of the dam across the river, and unwarned by the keeper of the boat of any danger, he pulled straight for the brink, suspecting nothing until they saw some one wildly waving on the shore as though they were in danger. They looked back and found they were already in the current of the dam; they went over and the boat capsized. Mrs. Talmage instantly disappeared and was drawn under the dam, from which her body was not rescued until days after. None of them were able to swim a stroke, but managed to hang on the bottom of the boat till help came from the shore. After an hour of effort to resuscitate his child, who was nine-tenths dead, she breathed again. A carriage came, and, leaving his wife in the bottom of the Schuylkill river, and with his little girl in semi-unconsciousness, and blood issuing from nostril and lip, wrapped in a shawl, on his lap; and with his sister Sarah and her child in the carriage, they drove to their desolated home. Since the world was created a more ghastly and agonizing calamity never happened. And that is the scene over which some ministers of the gospel, and men and women pretending to be decent, have made sport. His present wife was not within a hundred miles of the place. So far from being sisters they had never heard of each other, nor did Mr. Talmage even know of the existence of his present wife until nine months after that tragedy on the Schuylkill.

"For a knowledge of human life, and the adaptation of Divine truth to the whole being of man,—intellectual emotional, moral, practical, for the power of applying that truth, we know not his equal." His extraordinary imagination, earnestness, descriptive powers and humor, his art in grouping and arrangement, his wonderful mastery of words to illumine and alleviate human conditions, and to interpret and inspire the harmonies of the better nature, are appreciated by all who can put themselves in sympathy with his originality of methods, and his high consecration of purpose. His manner mates with his nature. Gestures are the accompaniment of what he says, as he stands out before the immense throng, without any notes before him, the effect produced cannot be understood by those who have never seen it. The solemnity, the tears, the awful hush, as though the audience could not breathe again, are ofttimes painful.

His voice is peculiar no musical, but productive of startling and strong effects, such as characterize no preacher on either side of the Atlantic. His power in keeping the attention of his audience from text to peroration has no equal. No man was ever less self-conscious in his work. He feels a mission of evangelization on him, as by the imposition of the Supreme. That mission he responds to by doing the duty that is nearest to him with all his might—as confident that he is under the care and order of a Divine Master as those who hear him are that they are under the spell of the greatest prose-poet that ever made the Gospel his song, and the redemption of the race the master passion of his heart.

The judgment of his generation will, of course, be divided upon him just as that of the next will not. That he is *a* topic in every newspaper is much more significant than the fact of what treatment it gives him. Only men of genius are universally commented on. The universality of the comment makes friends and foes alike prove the fact of the genius. That is what is impressive. As for the quality of the comment, it will, in nine cases out of ten, be much more a revelation of the character behind the pen which writes it than a true view or review of the man. This is necessarily so. The press and the pulpit in the main are defective judges of one another. The former rarely enters the inside of the latter's work. There is acquaintanceship, but not intimacy between them. Journals find out the *fact* of a preacher's power in time. Then they go looking for the causes. Long before, however, the masses have felt the causes and have realized, not merely discovered, the fact. The penalty of being the leaders of great masses has, from Whitefield and Wesley to Spurgeon and Talmage, been to serve as the target for small wits. A constant source of attack on men of such magnitude always has been and will be the printing-press, which, by the common consent of mankind, is described and dispensed from all consideration, when rated as Satanic. Its attack confirms a man's right to respect and reputation, and is a proof of his influence and greatness. It can be truly said that while secular criticism in the United States favorably regards Mr. Talmage in proportion to its intelligence and uprightness, the judgment of foreigners on him has long been an index to the judgment of posterity here. No other American is read so much and so constantly abroad.

F. P. V. N.

SOCIAL DYNAMITE.

CHAPTER I.

TWO HIGHWAYS.

YOUTH.
What will the boy become?

It was Monday at a country depot. Two young men are to take the cars for the city. Father brought them in a wagon with two trunks. The evening before at the old home was a sad time. The neighbors had gathered in to say good-by. Indeed, all the Sunday afternoon there had been a strolling that way from adjoining farms, for it was generally known that the two boys the next morning were going to the city to live, and the whole neighborhood was interested, some hoping they would do well and others, without saying anything, hoping for them a city failure. Sitting on the fence talking over the matter the neighbors would interlard conversation about the wheat crop of last summer, and the apple crop yet to be gathered, with remarks about the the city prospects of Edward and Nicholas, for those were the names of the two young men—Edward 17, and Nicholas 19; but Edward, although two years younger, being a little quicker to learn, knew as much as Nicholas. They were both brown-faced and hearty, and had gone through all the curriculum of hearty sports, by which muscle is developed and the chest filled out.

INDUSTRY AND STUDY.

Father and mother on Monday morning had both resolved to go to the depot with the boys, but the mother at the last moment backed out, and she said that somehow she felt quite weak that morning, and had no appetite for a day or two, and so concluded to say good-by at the front door of the old place; where she went and what she did after the wagon left I leave other mothers to guess. The breakfast things stood almost till noon before they were cleared away. But little was said on the way to the railroad station. As the locomotive whistle was heard coming around the curve, the father put out his hand—somewhat knotted at the knuckles and one of the joints stiffened years ago by a wound from a scythe—and said: "Good-by, Edward; good-by, Nicholas. Take good care of yourselves, and write as soon as you get there, and let us know how they treat you. Your mother will be anxious to hear."

Landed in the city, they sought out with considerable inquiry of policemen on street corners and questioning of car-drivers the two commercial establishments to which they were destined, so far apart that thereafter they seldom saw each other, for it is astonishing how far apart two persons can be in a large city, especially if their habits are different. Practically a hundred miles from Bowling Green to Canal street, or from Atlantic avenue to Fulton.

Edward, being the youngest, we must look after him first. He never was in so large a store in all his life. Such interminable shelves, such skillful imitation of real men and women to display goods on, such agility of cash boys, such immense stock of goods, and a whole community of em-

IDLENESS.

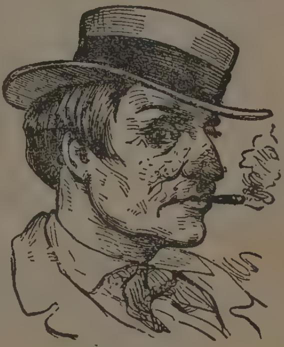
ployes! His head is confused as he seems dropped like a pebble in the great ocean of business life. "Have you seen that greenhorn from the country?" whispers young man to young man. "He is in such and such a department. We will have to break him in some night." Edward stands at his new place all day so home-sick that at any moment he could have cried aloud if his pride had not suppressed everything. Here and there a tear he carelessly dashed off as though it were from influenza or a cold in the head. But some of you know how a young man feels when set down in a city of strangers, thereafter to fight his own battles, and no one near by seeming to care whether he lives or dies. The center of a desert, a month's journey to the first settlement, is not much more solitary. But that evening as the hour for closing has come there are two or three young men who sidle up to Edward and ask him how he likes the city, and where he expects to go that night, and if he would like them to show him the sights. He thanks them, and says he shall have to take some evenings for unpacking and making arrangements, as he had just arrived, but says that after awhile he will be glad to accept their company. After spending two or three evenings in his boarding-house room, walking up and down, looking at the bare wall or an old chromo hung there at the time that religious newspapers by such prizes advanced their subscription lists, and after an hour toying with the match-box and ever and anon examining his watch to see if it is time to retire—and it seems that 10 o'clock at night or even 9 o'clock will never come—he resolves to accept tho chaperoning of his new friends at the store.

The following night they are all out together. Although his salary is not large, he is quite flush with pocket money, which the old folks gave him after saving by for some time. He can not be mean, and these friends are doing all this for his pleasure, and so he pays the bills. At the door of places of enchantment his companions can not find the change, and they accidentally fall behind just as the ticket office is approached, or they say they will make it all right, and will themselves pay the next time. Edward, accustomed to farm life or village life, is dazed and enchanted with the glitter of spectacular sin. Plain and blunt iniquity Edward would have immediately repulsed, but sin accompanied by bewitching orchestra; sin amid gilded pillars and gorgeous upholstery; sin arrayed in all the attractions that the powers of darkness in combination can arrange to magnetize a young man, is very different from sin in its loathsome and disgusting shape. But after a few nights being very late out, he says: "I must stop. My purse won't stand this. My health won't stand this. My reputation won't stand this." Indeed, one of the business firm one night from his private box, in which he applauded a play, in which attitudes and phraseology occurred, which if taken or uttered in his own parlor would have caused him to shoot or stab the actor on the spot—from this high-priced box sees in a cheaper place the new clerk of his store, and is led to ask questions as to his habits, and wonders how, on the salary the house pays him, he can do as he does. Edward, to recover his physical vigor and his finances, stopped awhile and spent a few more evenings examining the chromo on the wall and counting the matches in the match-box, or goes down into the boarding-house parlor to hear the gossip about the other boarders

HONORED SUCCESS.

or a discourse on the insufficiency of the table fare considering the price paid—the criticism severe in proportion as the fault-finder pays little or is resolved to leave unceremoniously and pay nothing at all.

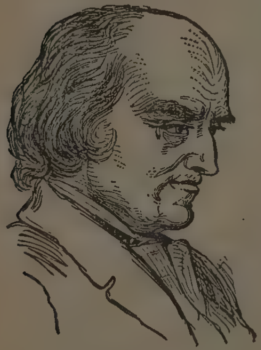
"Confound it!" cried the young man, "I cannot stand this life any longer, and I must go out and see the world." The same young men and others of a now larger acquaintance are ready to escort him. There is never any lack of such guidance. If a man wants to go the whole round of sin he can find plenty to take him, a whole regiment who know the way. But after awhile Edward's money is all gone. He has received his salary again and again, but it was spent before he got it, borrowing a little here and a little there. What shall he do now? Why, he has seen in his rounds of the gambling tables men who put down a dollar and took up ten, put down a hundred and took up a thousand. Why not he? To reconstruct his finances he takes a hand and wins; is so pleased he takes another hand and wins; is in a frenzy of delight and takes another hand—and loses all.


DISSIPATION.

When he first came to the city Edward was disposed to keep Sunday in quietness, reading a little and going occasionally to hear a sermon. Now Sunday is a day of carousal. He is so full of intoxicants by 11 o'clock in the day he staggers into one of the licensed rum holes of the city.

Some morning Edward, his breath stenchful with rum, takes his place in the store. He is not fit to be there. He is listless or silly or impertinent or in some way incompetent, and a messenger comes to him and says: "The firm desire to see you in their private office." The gentleman in the private office says: "Edward, we will not need you any more. We owe you a little money for services since we paid you last, and here it is."

"What is the matter?" says the young man. "I cannot understand this. Have I done anything?" The reply is: "We do not wish any words with you. Our engagement with each other is ended." "Out of employment!" What does that mean to a good young man? It means opportunity to get another and, perhaps, better place. It means opportunity for mental improvement and preparation for higher work. "Out of employment!" What does that mean to a dissipated young man? It means a lightning express train on a down grade on the Grand Trunk to perdition. Al Borak was a winged horse, on which Mohammed pretended to have ridden by night from Mecca to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to the seventh heaven with such speed that each step was as far as the eye could reach. A young man out of employment through his dissipations is seated on an Al Borak, riding as fast in the opposite direction.

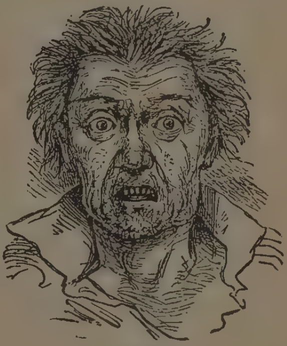


HONORED AGE.

It is now only five years since Edward came to town. He used to write home once a week at the longest. He has not written home for three months. "What can be the matter?" say the old people at home. One Saturday morning the father puts on the best apparel of his wardrobe and goes to the city to find out. "Oh, he has not been here for a long while," say the gentlemen of the firm. "Your son, I am sorry to say, is on the wrong track." The old father goes hunting him from place to place and comes suddenly upon him that night in a place of abandonment. The father says:

"My son, come with me. Your mother has sent me to bring you home. I hear you are out of money and good clothes, and you know as long as we live you can have a home. Come right away," he says, putting his hand on the young man's shoulder. In angry tone Edward replies: "Take your hands off me! You mind your own business! I will do as I please! Take your hands off me or I will strike you down! You go your way and I will go mine!"

That Saturday night, or rather Sunday morning—for it is by this time 2 o'clock in the morning—the father goes to the city home of his son Nicholas, and rings the bell, and rings again, and it seems as if no answer will be given; but after awhile a window is hoisted and a voice cries: "Who's there?" "It's me," says the old man. "Why father, is that you?" In a minute the door is opened and the son says: "What in the world brought you to the city at this hour of the night?" "Oh! Edward has brought me here. I feared your mother would go stark crazy not hearing from him, and I find out that it is worse with him than I expected. "Yes," says Nicholas, "I had not the heart to write you anything about it. I have tried my best with him and all in vain. But it is after 2 o clock," says Nicholas to his father, "and I will take you to a bed."


WRECK.

On a comfortable couch in that house the old father lies down coaxing sleep for a few hours, but no sleep comes. Whose house is it? That of his son Nicholas. The fact is that Nicholas, soon after coming to the city, became indispensable to the commercial establishment where he was placed. He knew what few persons know, that in all departments of business and mechanism and art there is a surplus of people of ordinary application and ordinary diligence; there is a great scarcity and always has been a great scarcity of people who excel. Plenty of people to do things poorly or tolerably well, but very few clerks or business men or mechanics who can do splendidly well. Appreciating this, Nicholas had resolved to do so grandly that the business firm could not do without him. Always at his place a little after everybody had gone. As extremely polite to those who decline purchasing as to those who made large purchases. He drank no wine, for he saw it was the empoisonment of multitudes, and when any one asked him to take something he said "No" with the peculiar intonation that meant no. His conversation was always as pure as if his sisters had been listening. He went to no place of amusement where he would be ashamed to die. He never bet or gambled, even at a church fair. When he was at the boarding-house, after he had got all the artistic development he could possibly receive from the chromo on the wall, he began to study that which would help him to promotion—study penmanship, study biographies of successful men; or went forth to places of innocent amusement and to Young Men's Christian Associations, and was not ashamed to be found at a church prayer-meeting. He rose from position to position, and from one salary to another salary.

Only five years in town and yet he has rented his own house or a suite of rooms, not very large, but a home large enough in its happiness to be a type of heaven. In the morning, as the old father, with handkerchief in hand, comes crying down-stairs to the table there are four persons, one for each side; the young man, and opposite to him the best blessing that a God of infinite goodness can bestow, a good wife; and on another side the high chair filled with dimpled and rollicking glee, that makes the grandfather opposite smile outside while he has a broken heart within.

It was Sabbath, and Nicholas and his father, knowing that there is no place so appropriate for a troubled soul as the house of God, find their way to church. It is communion day, and what is the old man's surprise to see his son pass down the aisle with one of the silver chalices, showing him to be a church official. The fact was that Nicholas, from the start, in city life honored God, and God had honored him. When the first wave of city temptation struck him he had felt the need of divine guidance and divine protection, and in prayer had sought a regenerated heart, and had obtained that mightiest of all armor, that mightiest of all protection, that mightiest of all reinforcements, the multipotent and omnipotent grace of God,and you might as well throw a thistle-down against Gibraltar, expecting to destroy it, as with all the combined temptations of earth and hell try to overthrow a young man who can truthfully say: "God is my refuge and strength."

Come, let us measure Nicholas around the head. As many inches of brain as any other intelligent man. Let us measure him around the heart. It is so large that it takes in all the earth and all the heavens. Measure him around the purse. He has more resources than nine-tenths of those who on that Monday came in on any of the railroads from North, South, East or West. But that Sabbath afternoon, while in the back room Nicholas and his father are talking over any attempt at the reclamation of Edward, there is a ringing of the door-bell and a man with the uniform of a policeman stands there; and a man with some embarrassment and some halting, and in a roundabout way, says that in a fight in some low haunt of the city Edward had been hurt. He says to Nicholas: "I heard that he was some relation of yours and thought you ought to know it." "Hurt? Is he badly hurt?" "Yes very badly hurt." "Is the wound mortal?" "Yes; it is mortal. To tell you the whole truth, sir," says the policeman, "although I can hardly bear to tell you, he is dead." "Dead!" cried Nicholas; and by this time the whole family are in the hallway. The father says: "Just as I feared. It will kill his mother when she hears of it. Oh, my son, my son! Would to God I had died for thee. Oh, my son, my son!" "Wash off the wounds," says Nicholas, "and bring him right here to my house, and let there be all respect and gentleness shown him. It is the least we can do for him."

Oh, what obsequies! The next door neighbors hardly knew what was going on; but Nicholas and the father and mother knew. Out of the Christian and beautiful home of the one brother is carried the dissolute brother. No word of blame uttered. No harsh things said. On a bank of camellias is spelled out the word "Brother." Had the prodigal been true and pure and noble and honorable in life and honorable in death he could not have been carried forth with more tenderness or slept in a more beautiful casket, or been deposited in a more beautiful garden of the dead. Amid the loosened turf the brothers who left the country for city life five years before, now part forever. The last scene of the fifth act of an awful tragedy of human life is ended.

What made the difference between these two young men? Religion. The one depended on himself, the other depended on God. They started from the same home, had the same opportunities of education, arrived in the city on the same day, and if there was any difference, Edward had the advantage, for he was brighter and quicker, and all the neighbors prophesied greater success for him than for Nicholas. But behold and wonder at the tremendous secret.

Nothing in these characters is fictitious except the names. They are in every city, and in every street of every city, and in every country. Not two of them but ten thousand. They are before and round about us, they are invulnerable through religious defense and the blasted of city allurements. Those who shall have longevity in beautiful homes and others who shall have early graves of infamy. All are given the choice of the two characters, the two histories, the two experiences, the two destinies, the two worlds, the two eternities.

Standing with the reader at the forks of the road something makes me think that if I set before him the termini of the two roads he will take the right one. There are many who have not fully made up their minds which road to take. "Come with us!" cry all the voices of righteousness. "Come with us!" cry all the voices of sin.

Now, the trouble is that many make a disgraceful surrender. As we all know, there is an honorable and dignified surrender, as when a small host yields to superior numbers. It is no humiliation for a thousand men to yield to ten thousand. It is better than to keep on when there can be no result except that of massacre. But those who surrender to sin make a surrender when on their side they have enough reserve forces to rout all the armies of Perdition, whether led on by what a demonographer calls Belial, or Beelzebub, or Apollyon, or Abaddon, or Ariel. The disgraceful thing about the surrender at Sedan was, the French handed over 419 field-guns and mitrailleuses, 6,000 horses and 83,000 armed men. And it is base for that man to surrender to sin when all the armaments of almightiness would have wheeled to the front to fight his battle if he had waved one earnest signal. But no! He surrendered body, mind, soul, reputation, home, pedigree, time and eternity, while yet all the prayers of his Christian ancestors were on his side and all the proffered aid —supernal, cherubic, seraphic, angelic, deific.

The abdication of Alexander, of Bulgaria, caused a great deal of talk, but what a paltry throne was that from which the unhappy king descended compared with the abdication of that young man, or middle-aged man, or old man, who quits the throne of his opportunity and turns his back upon a heavenly throne, and tramps off into ignominy and everlasting exile! That is an abdication enough to shake a universe. In Persia they will not have a blind man on the throne, and when a reigning monarch is jealous of some ambitious relative he has his eyes extinguished so that he can not possibly ever come to the throne. And that suggests the difference between the way sin and divine grace take hold of a man. The former blinds him so he may never reach the throne, while the latter illumines the blind that he may receive the coronation.

I have made up my mind that our city life is destroying too many young men. There comes in every September and October a large influx of those between sixteen and twenty-four years of age, and New York and Brooklyn damn at least a thousand of them every year. They are shoveled off and down with no more compunction than that with which a coal-heaver scoops the anthracite into a dark cellar. What with the wine-cup and the gambler's dice, and the scarlet enchantress, no young man, without the grace of God, is safe ten minutes. There is much discussion about which is the worst city of the continent. Some say New York, some say New Orleans, some say Chicago, some say St. Louis. What I have to say is, you can not make much comparison between the infinities, and in all our cities the temptation seems infinite. We keep a great many mills running day and night. No rice-mills or cotton-mills. Not mills of corn or wheat, but mills for grinding up men. Such are all the grog-shops, licensed and unlicensed. Such are all the gambling saloons. Such are all the houses of infamy. And we do all the work according to law, and we turn out a new grist every hour, and grind up warm hearts and clear heads, and the earth about a cider-mill is not more saturated with the beverage than the ground about all these mind-destroying institutions is saturated with the blood of victims. The cry from the cities to the villages and the farm is, "Send us more supply!" "Send us more men and women to put under the wheels." Give us full chance and we would grind up in the municipal mill five hundred a day. We have enough machinery; we have enough men who can run them. Give us more homes to crush; give us more parental hearts to pulverize! Put into the hopper the wardrobes and the family Bibles, and the livelihoods of wives and children. Give us more material for these mighty mills, which are wet with tears and sulphurous with woe, and trembling with the earthquakes of an incensed God, who will, unless our cities repent, cover us up as quick and as deep as in August of the year '79 Vesuvius avalanched Herculaneum.

O, man and woman, ponder the path of thy feet! See which way you are going. Will you have the destiny of Edward or Nicholas? Plutarch tells us that after Cæsar was slain and his twenty-three wounds had been displayed to the people, arousing an uncontrollable excitement, and the body of the dead conqueror, according to ancient customs, had been put upon the funeral pile, and the flames arose, people rushed up, took from the blazing mass torches with which they ran through the city, crying the glory of the assassinated ruler, and the shame of his assassinators. On this day, when the five bleeding wounds of Christ your King, are shown to you, and the fires of his earthly suffering blaze before your imagination, take a torch and start heavenward—a torch with light for yourself and light for others; for the race that starts at the cross ends at the throne. While the twenty-three wounds of Cæsar wrought nothing but the consternation of the people, from the five wounds of our Conqueror there flows a transforming power to make all the uncounted millions who will accept it, forever happy and forever free.

CHAPTER II.

EVIL COMPANIONS.

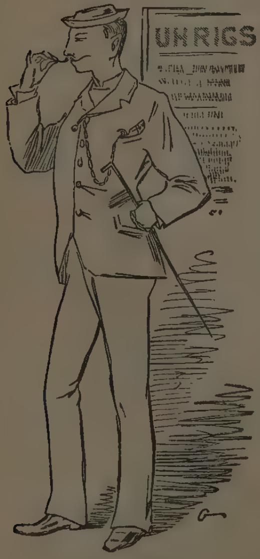
Hardly any young man goes to a place of dissipation alone. Each one is accompanied. No man goes to ruin alone. He always takes some one else with him. "May it please the court," said a convicted criminal, when asked if he had anything to say before sentence of death was passed upon him—"may it please the court, bad company has been my ruin. I received the blessings of good parents, and, in return, promised to avoid all evil associations. Had I kept my promise, I should have been saved this shame, and been free from the load of guilt that hangs around me like a vulture, threatening to drag me to justice for crimes yet unrevealed. I, who once moved in the first circles of society, and have been the guest of distinguished public men, am lost, and all through bad company."

This is but one of the thousand proofs that the companion of fools shall be destroyed. It is the invariable rule. There is a well man in the wards of a hospital, where there are a hundred people sick with ship fever, and he will not be so apt to take the disease as a good man would be apt to be smitten with moral distemper, if shut up with iniquitous companions. In olden times prisoners were herded together in the same cell, but each one learned the vices of all the culprits, so that, instead of being reformed by incarceration, the day of liberation turned them out upon society beasts not men.

We may, in our places in business, be compelled to talk to and mingle with bad men; but he who deliberately chooses to associate himself with vicious people, is engaged in carrying on a courtship with a Delilah, whose shears will clip off all the locks of his strength, and he will be tripped into perdition. Sin is catching, is infectious, is epidemic. I will let you look over the millions of people now inhabiting the earth, and I challenge you to show me a good man who, after one year, has made choice and consorted with the wicked. A thousand dollars reward for one such instance. I care not how strong your character may be. Associate with horse-thieves, you will become a horse-thief. Clan with burglars, and you will become a burglar. Go among the unclean, and you will become unclean. Many a young man has been destroyed by not appreciating this. He wakes up some morning in the great city, and knows no one except the persons into whose employ he has entered. As he goes into the store all the clerks mark him, measure him, and discuss him. The upright young men of the store wish him well, but perhaps wait for a formal introduction, and even then have some delicacy about inviting him into their associations. But the bad young men of the store at the first opportunity approach and offer their services. They patronize him. They profess to know all about the town. They will take him anywhere he wishes to go—if he will pay the expenses. For if a good young man and a bad young man go to some place where they ought not, the good young man has invariably to pay the charges. At the moment the ticket is to be paid for, or the champagne settled for, the bad young

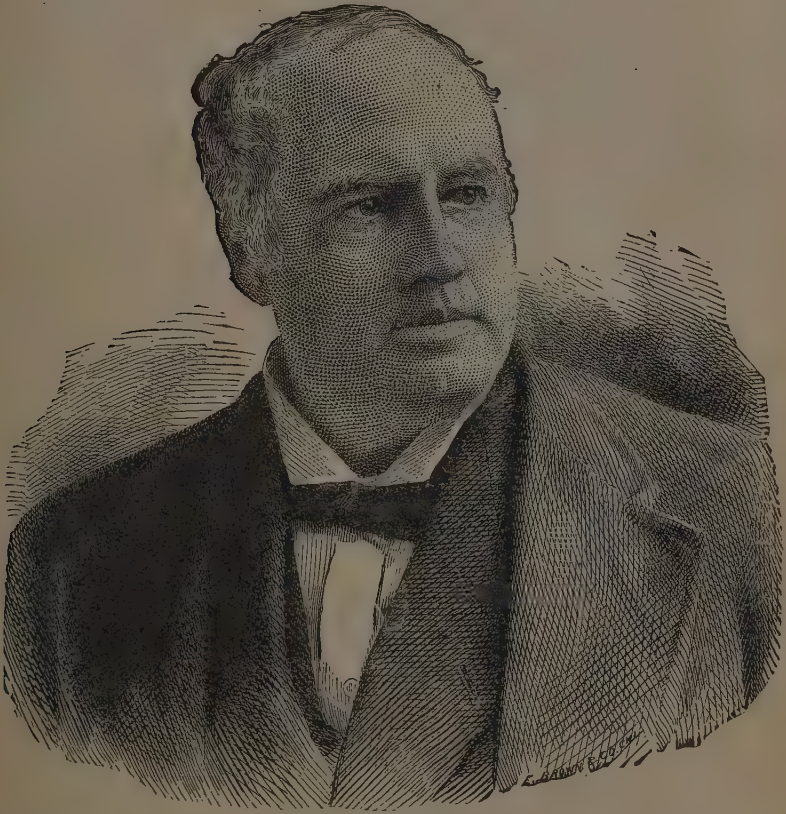
THE SMART CLERK.

man feels around in his pockets and says, "I have forgotten my pocket-book." In forty-eight hours after the young man has entered the store the bad fellows of the establishment slap him on the shoulder familiarly and, at his stupidity in taking certain allusions, say: "My young friend, you will have to be broken in;" and they immediately proceed to break him in. Young man, in the name of God, I warn you to beware how you let a bad man talk familiarly with you. If such an one slap you on the shoulder familiarly, turn round and give him a withering look, until the wretch crouch in your presence. There is no monstrosity of wickedness that can stand unabashed under the glance of purity and honor. God keeps the lightnings of heaven in his own scabbard, and no human arm can wield them; but God gives to every young man a lightning that he may use, and that is the lightning of an honest eye. Those who have been close observers of city life will not wonder why I give warning to young men, and say, "Beware of evil companions."



THE IDLER.

I warn you to shun the skeptic —the young man who puts his fingers in his vest and laughs at your old-fashioned religion, and turns over to some mystery of the Bible, and says, "Explain that, my pious friend; explain that." And who says, "Nobody shall scare me; I am not afraid of the future; I used to believe in such things, and so did my father and mother, but I have got over it." Yes, he has got over it; and if you sit in his company a little longer you will get over it too. Without presenting one argument against the Christian religion, such men will, by their jeers and scoffs and caricatures, destroy your respect for that religion, which was the strength of your father in his declining years, and the pillow of your old mother when she lay a-dying.

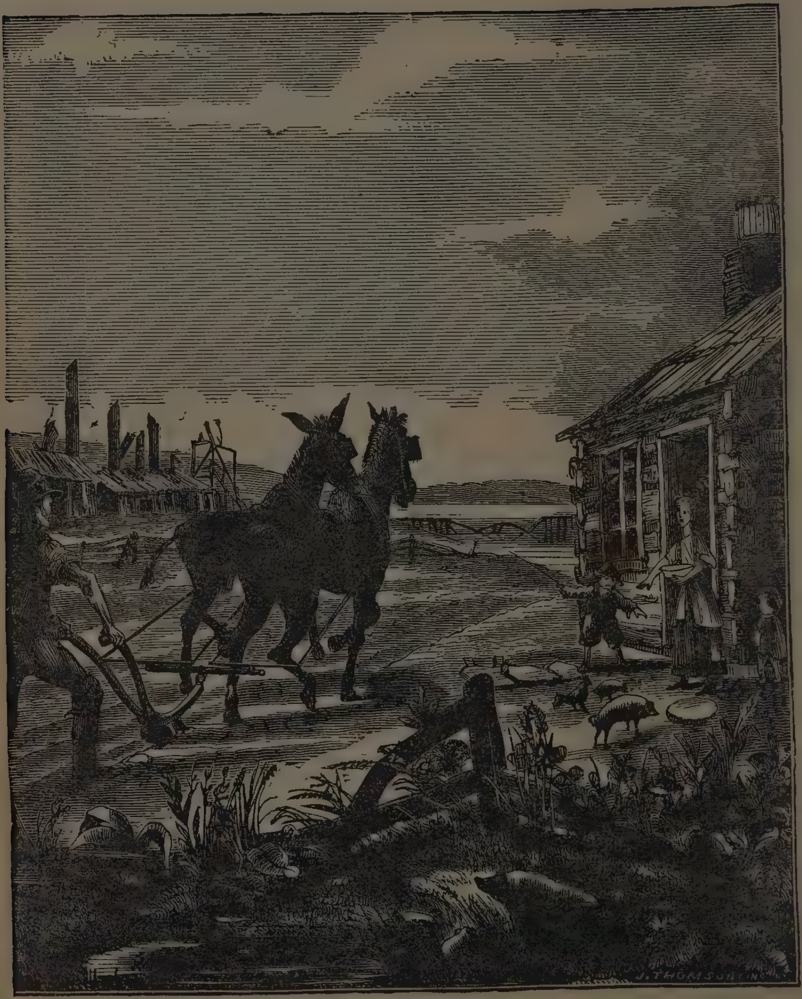

E. BROWN & CO. SC.

ROBERT J. INGERSOLL.
THE INFIDEL.

Alas! a time will come when that blustering young infidel will have to die, and then his diamond ring will flash no splendor in the eyes of Death, as he stands over the couch, waiting for his soul. Those beautiful locks will be uncombed upon the pillow; and the dying man will say, "I cannot die—I cannot die." Death standing ready beside the couch, says, "You must die; you have only half a minute to live; let me have it right away—your soul." "No," says the young infidel, "here are my gold rings, and these pictures; take them all." "No," says Death, "What do I care for pictures!—your soul." "Stand back," says the dying infidel. "I will not stand back," says Death, "for you have only ten seconds now to live; I want your soul." The dying man says, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room. O God!" "Hush," says Death; "you said there was no God." "Pray for me," exclaims the expiring infidel. "Too late to pray," says Death; "but three more seconds to live, and I will count them off—one—two—three." He has gone! Where? Where? Carry him out—out, and bury him beside his father and mother, who died while holding fast the Christian religion. They died singing; but the young infidel only said, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room."

Again, I urge you to shun the companionship of idlers. There are men hanging around every store, and office and shop, who have nothing to do, or act as if they had not. They are apt to come in when the firm are away and wish to engage you in conversation while you are engaged in your regular employment. Politely suggest to such persons that you have no time to give them during business hours. Nothing would please them so well as to have you renounce your occupation and associate with them. Much of the time they lounge around the doors of engine houses, or after the dining hour stand upon the steps of a fashionable hotel or an elegant restaurant, wishing to give you the idea that that is the place where they dine. But they do not dine there. They are sinking down lower and lower, day by day. Neither by day nor by night have anything to do with the idlers. Before you admit a man into your acquaintance ask him politely, "What do you do for a living?" If he says "Nothing, I am a gentleman," look out for him. He may have a very soft hand, and very faultless apparel, and have a high-sounding family name, but his touch is death. Before you know it, you will in his presence be ashamed of your work-dress. Business will become to you drudgery, and after awhile you will lose your place, and afterward your respectability, and last of all your soul. Idleness is next door to villainy. Thieves, gamblers, burglars, shop-lifters and assassins are made from the class who have nothing to do. When the police go to hunt up and arrest a culprit they seldom go to look in at the busy carriage factory, or behind the counter where diligent clerks are employed, but they go among the groups of idlers. The play is going on at the theater, when suddenly there is a scuffle in the top gallery. What is it? A policeman has come in, and, leaning over, has tapped on the shoulder of a young man, saying, "I want you, sir." He has not worked during the day, but somehow has raked together a shilling or two to get into the top gallery. He is an idler. The man on his right hand is an idler, and the man on his left hand is an idler.

During the past few years there has been a great deal of dullness in business. Young men have complained that they have little to do. If they have nothing else to do they can read and improve their minds and hearts. These times are not always to continue. Business is waking up, and the superior knowledge that in this interregnum of work you may obtain will be worth fifty thousand dollars of capital. The large fortunes of the next twenty years are having their foundations laid this winter by the young men who are giving themselves to self-improvement. I went into a store in New York and saw five men, all Christians, sitting round, saying that they had nothing to do. It is an outrage for a Christian


J. THOMSON SC.

THE SHIFTLESS FARMER.

man to have nothing to do. Let him go out and visit the poor, or distribute tracts, or go and read the Bible to the sick, or take out his New Testament and be making his eternal fortune. Let him go into the back office and pray.

Shrink back from idleness in yourself and in others, if you would maintain a right position. Good old Ashbel Green, at more than eighty years of age, was found busy writing, and some young man said to him: "Why do you keep busy? It is time for you to rest?" He answered: "I keep busy to keep out of mischief." No man is strong enough to be idle.

Are you fond of pictures? If so I will show you one of the works of an old master. Here it is: "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered well. I looked upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth and thy want as an armed man." I don't know of another sentence in the Bible more explosive than that. It first hisses softly, like the fuse of a cannon, and at last bursts like a fifty-four pounder. The old proverb was right: "The devil tempts most men, but idlers tempt the devil."

A young man came to a man of ninety years of age and said to him: "How have you made out to live so long and be so well?" The old man took the youngster to an orchard, and, pointing to some large trees full of apples, said: "I planted these trees when I was a boy, and do you wonder that now I am permitted to gather the fruit of them?" We gather in old age what we plant in our youth. Sow to the wind and we reap the whirlwind. Plant in early life the right kind of a Christian character, and you will eat luscious fruit in old age and gather these harvest apples in eternity.

I urge you to avoid the perpetual pleasure-seeker. I believe in recreation and amusement. I need it as much as I need bread, and go to my gymnasium with as conscientious a purpose as I go to the Lord's Supper; and all persons of sanguine temperament must have amusement and recreation. God would not have made us with the capacity to laugh if he had not intended us sometimes to indulge it. God hath hung in sky, and set in wave, and printed on grass many a roundelay; but he who chooses pleasure-seeking for his life-work does not understand for what God made him. Our amusements are intended to help us in some earnest mission. The thunder-cloud hath an edge exquisitely purpled, but with voice that jars the earth it declares, "I go to water the green fields." The wild-flowers under the fence are gay, but they say, "We stand here to make room for the wheat-field, and to refresh the husbandmen in their nooning." The stream sparkles and foams and frolics and says, "I go to baptize the moss. I lave the spots on the trout. I slake the thirst of the bird. I turn the wheel of the mill. I rock in my crystal cradle muckshaw and water-lily." And so, while the world plays, it works. Look out for the man who always plays and never works.

You will do well to avoid those whose regular business it is to play ball, skate or go a-boating. All these sports are grand in their places. I never derived so much advantage from any ministerial association as from a ministerial club that went out to play ball every Saturday afternoon in the outskirts of Philadelphia. These recreations are grand to give us muscle and spirits for our regular toil. I believe in muscular Christianity. A man is often not so near God with a weak stomach as when he has a strong digestion. But shun those who make it their life occupation to sport. There are young men whose industry and usefulness have fallen overboard from the yacht. There are men whose business fell through the ice of the skating pond and has never since been heard of. There is a beauty in the gliding of a boat, in the song of skates, in the soaring of a well-struck ball, and I never see one fly but I involuntarily throw up my hands to catch it; and, so far from laying an injunction upon ball-playing, or any other innocent sport, I claim them all as belonging of right to those of us who toil in the grand industries of church and state.

But the life business of pleasure-seeking always makes in the end, a criminal or a sot. George Brummel was smiled upon by all England, and his life was given to pleasure. He danced with peeresses, and swung a round of mirth and wealth and applause, until, exhausted of purse, and worn out of body, and bankrupt of reputation, and ruined of soul, he begged a biscuit from a grocer, and declared that he thought a dog's life was better than a man's.

Such men will crowd around your anvil, or seek to decoy you off. They will want you to break out in the midst of your busy day to take a ride with them. They will tell you of some people you must see; of some excursion that you must take; of some Sabbath day that you ought to dishonor. They will tell you of exquisite wines that you must take; of costly operas that you must hear; of wonderful dancers that you must see; but before you accept their convoy or their companionship, remember that while at the end of a useful life you may be able to look back to kindnesses done, to honorable work accomplished, to poverty helped, to a good name earned, to Christian influence exerted, to a Saviour's cause advanced—these pleasure-seekers on their death-bed have nothing better to review than a torn play-bill, a ticket for the races, an empty tankard, and the cast-out rinds of a carousal; and as in the delirium of their awful death they clutch the goblet, and press it to their lips, the dregs of the cup falling upon their tongue, will begin to hiss and uncoil with the adders of an eternal poison.

Cast out these men from your company. Do not be intimate with them. Always be polite. There is no demand that you ever sacrifice politeness. A young man accosted a Christian Quaker with "Old chap, how did you make all your money?" The Quaker replied, "By dealing in an article that thou mayest deal in if thou wilt—*civility*." Always be courteous, but at the same time firm. Say *no* as if you meant it. Have it understood in store, and shop, and street that you will not stand in the companionship of the skeptic, the idle, the pleasure-seeker.

Rather than enter the companionship of such, accept the invitation to a better feast. The promises of God are the fruits. The harps of heaven are the music. Clusters from the vineyards of God have been pressed into the tankards. The sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty are the guests. While, standing at the banquet, to fill the cups and divide the clusters, and command the harps, and welcome the guests, is a daughter of God on whose brow are the blossoms of Paradise, and in whose cheek is the flush of celestial summer. Her name is Religion.

"Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace."

CHAPTER III.

DARK DEEDS.

When night came down on Babylon, Ninevah and Jerusalem, they needed careful watching, otherwise the incendiary's torch might have been thrust into the very heart of the metropolitan splendor; or enemies, marching from the hills, might have forced the gates. All night long, on top of the wall and in front of the gates might be heard the measured step of the watchman on his solitary beat; silence hung in the air, save as some passer by raised the question: "Watchman, what of the night?" It is to me a deeply suggestive and solemn thing to see a man standing guard by night. It thrilled through me, as at the gate of an arsenal at Charleston, the question once smote me: "Who comes there?" followed by the sharp command: "Advance and give the countersign." Every moral teacher stands on picket, or patrols the wall as watchman. His work is to sound the alarm; and whether it be in the first watch, in the second watch, in the third watch, or in the fourth watch, to be vigilant until the daybreak flings its "morning glories" of blooming cloud across the arching trellis of the sky. The ancients divided their night into four parts—the first watch, from 6 to 9; the second, from 9 to 12; the third, from 12 to 3; and the fourth, from 3 to 6.

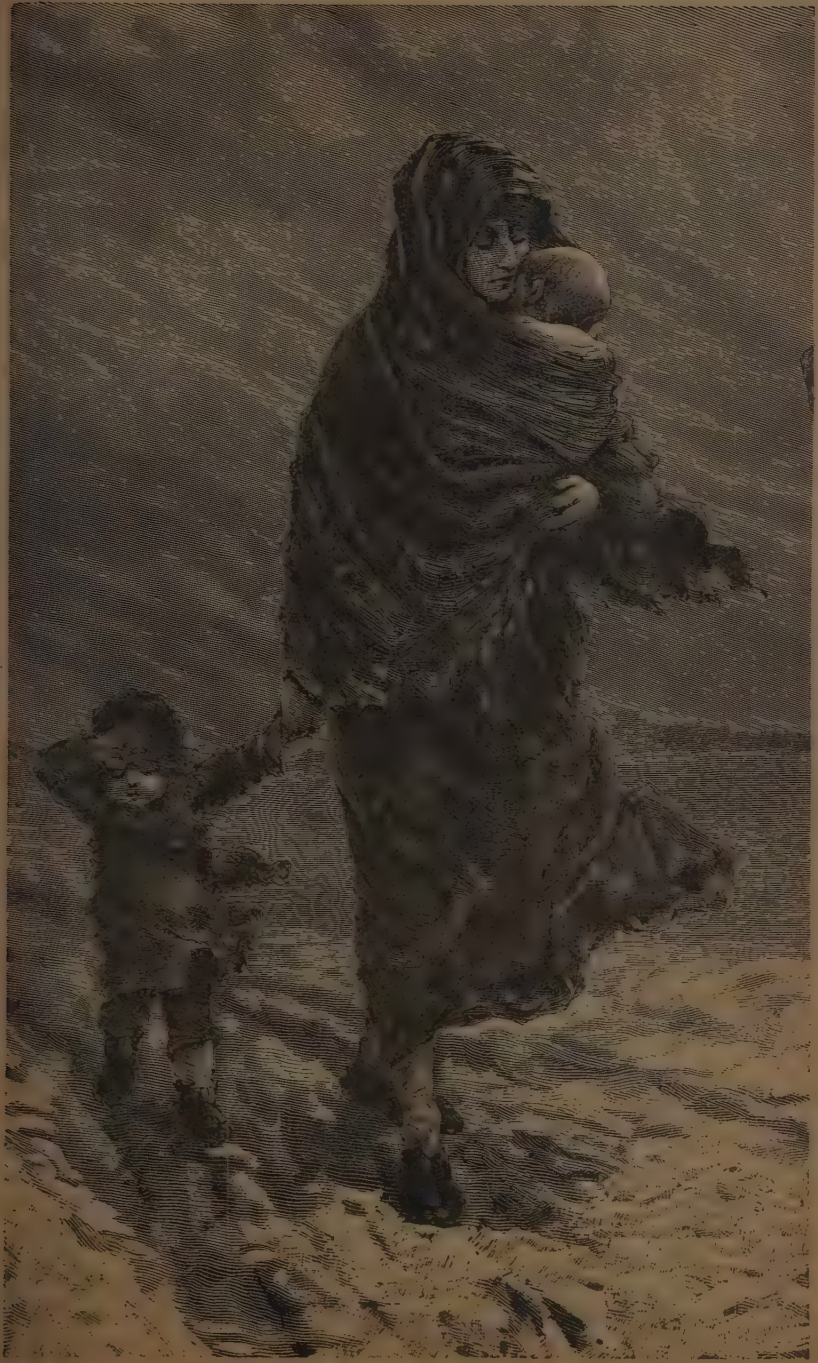
I never weary of looking upon the life and brilliancy of the city in the first watch. That is the hour when the stores are closing. The laboring men, having quitted the scaffolding and the shop, are on their way home. It rejoices me to give them my seat in the city car. They have stood and hammered away all day. Their feet are weary. They are exhausted with the tug of work. They are mostly cheerful. With appetites sharpened on the swift turner's wheel and the carpenter's whetstone, they seek the evening meal. The clerks, too, have broken away from the counter, and with brain weary of the long line of figures and the whims of those who go a shopping, seek the face of mother, or wife and child. The merchants are unharnessing themselves from their anxieties on their way up the street. The boys that lock up are heaving away at the shutters, shoving the heavy bolts and taking a last look at the fire to see that all is safe. The streets are thronged with young men, setting out from the great centers of bargain-making. Let idlers clear the street, and give right of way to the besweated artisans and merchants! They have earned their bread and are now on their way home to get it. The lights in full jet hang over ten thousand evening repasts—the parents at either end of the table, the children between. Thank God, "who setteth the solitary in families."

A few hours later, and all the places of amusement, good and bad, are in full tide. Lovers of art, catalogue in hand, stroll through the galleries and discuss the pictures. The ballroom is resplendent with the rich apparal of those who, on either side of the white, glistening boards, await the signal from the orchestra. The footlights of the theater flash up; the bell rings, and the curtain rises; and out from the gorgeous scenery glide the actors, greeted with the vociferation of the expectant multitudes. Concert halls are lifted into enchantment with the warble of one songstress, or swept out on a sea of tumultuous feeling by the blast of brazen instruments. Drawing-rooms are filled with all gracefulness of apparel, with all sweetness of sound, with all splendor of manner; mirrors are catching up and multiplying the scene, until it seems as if in infinite corridors there were garlanded groups advancing and retreating. The outdoor air rings with laughter, and with the moving to and fro of thousands on the great promenades. The dashing span adrip with the foam of the long country ride, rushes past as you halt at the curbstone. Mirth, revelry, beauty, fashion, magnificence mingle in the great metropolitan picture until the thinking man goes home to think more seriously, and the praying man to pray more earnestly. A beautiful and overwhelming thing is the city in the first and second watches of the night.

But the clock strikes 12 and the third watch has begun. The thunder of the city has rolled out of the air. The slightest sounds cut the night with such distinctness as to attract your attention. The tinkling of the bell of the street car in the distance, and the baying of the dog. The stamp of a horse in the next street, the slamming of a saloon door; the hiccough of the drunkard; the shriek of the steam whistle five miles away. O, how suggestive, my friends, the third watch of the night. There are honest men passing up and down the street. Here is a city missionary who has been carrying a scuttle of coal to that poor family in that dark place. Here is an undertaker going up the steps of a building from which comes a bitter cry which indicates that the destroying angel has smitten the first-born. Here is a minister of religion who has been giving the sacrament to a dying Christian. Here is a physician passing along in great haste, the messenger a few steps ahead hurrying on to the household. Nearly all the lights have gone out in the dwellings, for it is the third watch of the night. That light in the window is the light of the watcher, for the medicines must be administered, and the fever must be watched, and the restless tossing off of the coverlid must be resisted, and the ice must be kept on hot temples, and the perpetual prayer must go up from hearts soon to be broken. Oh, the third watch of the night. What a stupendous thought—a whole city at rest. Weary arms preparing for to-morrow's toil. Hot brain being cooled off. Rigid muscles relaxed. Excited nerves soothed.

The white hair of the octogenarian in thin drifts across the pillow, fresh fall of flakes on snow already fallen. Childhood with its dimpled hand thrown out on the pillow and with every breath taking in a new store of fun and frolic. Third watch of the night! God's slumberless eye will look. Let one great wave of refreshing slumber roll over the heart of the great town, submerging care and anxiety, and worriment and pain.

Let the city sleep. But, my friends, be not deceived. There will be thousands to-night who will not sleep at all. Go up that dark alley, and be cautious where you tread, lest you fall over the prostrate form of a drunkard lying on his own doorstep. Look about you, lest you feel the garroter's hug. Look through the broken window-pane, and see what you can see. You say: "Nothing." Then listen. What is it? "God help us!" No footlights, but tragedy ghastlier and mightier than Ristori or Edwin Booth ever enacted. No light, no fire, no bread, no hope. Shivering in the cold, they have had no food for twenty-four hours. You say: "Why don't they beg?" They do, but they get nothing. You say: "Why don't they deliver themselves over to the almshouse?" Ah! you would not ask that if you ever heard the bitter cry of a man or a child when told he must go to the almshouse. "Oh," you say, "they are vicious poor, and, therefore, they do not deserve our sympathy." Are they vicious? So much more need they your pity. The Christian poor, God helps them. Through their night there twinkles the round, merry star of hope, and through the broken window-pane they see the crystals of heaven; but the vicious poor, they are more to be pitied. Their last light has gone out. You excuse yourself from helping them by saying they are so bad, they brought this trouble on themselves. I reply, where I give ten prayers for the innocent who are suffering I will give twenty prayers for the guilty who are suffering. The fisherman, when he sees a vessel dashing into the breakers, comes

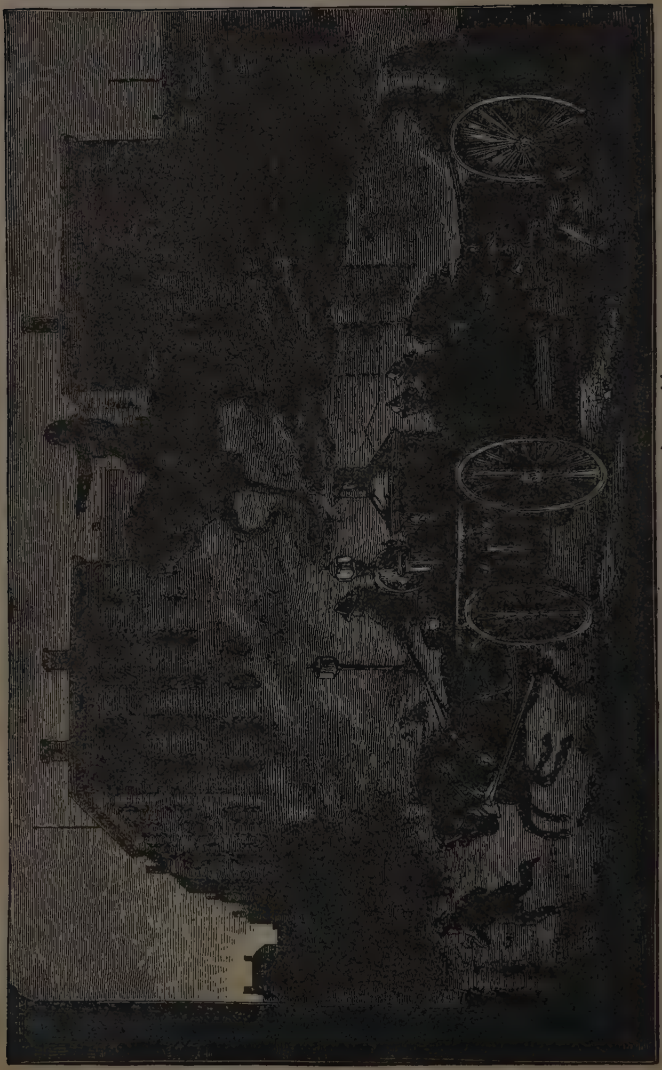


THE CHRISTIAN POOR.

out from his hut and wraps the warmest flannels around those who are most chilled and most bruised and most battered in the wreck; and I want you to know that these vicious poor have had two shipwrecks—shipwreck of the body, shipwreck of the soul—shipwreck for time, shipwreck for eternity. Pity, by all means, the innocent who are suffering, but pity more the guilty.

Pass on through the alley. Open the door. "Oh," you say, "it is locked." No, it is not locked. It has never been locked. No burglar would be tempted to go in there to steal anything. The door is never locked. Only a broken chair stands against the door. Shove it back. Go in. Strike a match. Now, look. Beastliness and rags. See those glaring eyeballs. Be careful now what you say. Do not utter any insult, do not utter any suspicion, if you value your life. What is that red mark on the wall? It is the mark of a murderer's hand! Look at those two eyes rising up out of the darkness and out from the straw in the corner, coming toward you, and as they come near you, your light goes out. Strike another match. Ah! this is a babe, not like those beautiful children presented in baptism. This little one never smiled; it never will smile. A flower flung on an awfully barren beach. Oh, Heavenly Shepherd, fold that little one in thy arms. Wrap around you your shawl or your coat tighter, for the cold wind sweeps through. Strike another match. Ah! is it possible that that young woman's scarred and bruised face ever was looked into by maternal tenderness? Utter no scorn. Utter no harsh word. No ray of hope has dawned on that brow for many a year. No ray of hope ever will dawn on that brow. But the light has gone out. Do not strike another light. It would be a mockery to kindle another light in such a place as that. Pass out and pass down the street. All our great cities are full of such homes, and the worst time the third watch of the night.

Do you know it is in this third watch of the night that



THE THIRD WATCH, FIRE! FIRE!!

criminals do their worst work? It is the criminal's watch. At 8:30 o'clock you will find them in the drinking saloon, but toward 12 o'clock they go to their garrets, they get out their tools, then they start on the street. Watching on either side for the police, they go to their work of darkness. This is a burglar, and the false key will soon touch the store lock. This is an incendiary, and before morning there will be a light on the sky, and a cry of "Fire! fire!" This is an assassin, and to-morrow morning there will be a dead body in one of the vacant lots. During the daytime these villains in our cities lounge about, some asleep and some awake, but when the third watch of the night arrives, their eye keen, their brain cool, their arm strong, their foot fleet to fly or pursue, they are ready. Many of these poor creatures were brought up in that way. They were born in a thieves' garret. Their childish toy was a burglar's dark lantern. The first thing they remember was their mother bandaging the brow of their father, struck by the police club. They began by robbing boys' pockets, and now they have come to dig the underground passage to the cellar of the bank, and are preparing to blast the gold vault. Just so long as there are neglected children of the street, just so long we will have these desperadoes. Some one, wishing to make a good Christian point and to quote a passage of Scripture, expecting to get a Scriptural passage in answer, said to one of these poor lads, cast out and wretched: "When your father and your mother forsake you, who, then, will take you up?" and the boy said: "The perlice, the perlice!"

In the third watch of the night gambling does its worst work. What though the hours be slipping away, and though the wife be waiting in the cheerless home? Stir up the fire. Bring on more drinks. Put up more stakes. That commercial house that only a little while ago put out a sign of copartnership will this winter be wrecked on a gambler's table. There will be many a money-till that will spring a leak. A member of Congress gambled with a member elect and won one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. The old way of getting a living is so slow. The old way of getting a fortune is so stupid. Come, let us toss up and see who shall have it. And so the work goes on, from the wheezing wretches pitching pennies in a rum grocery up to the millionaire gambler in the stock market. In the third watch of the night, pass down the streets of these cities, and you hear the click of the dice, and the sharp, keen stroke of the ball on the billiard-table. At these places merchant princes dismount, and legislators, tired of making laws, take a respite in breaking them. All classes of people are robbed by this crime—the importer of foreign silks and the dealer in Chatham street pocket handkerchiefs. The clerks of the store take a hand after the shutters are put up, and the officers of the court while away their time while the jury is out. In Baden-Baden, when that city was the greatest of all gambling places on earth, it was no unusual thing the next morning, in the woods around about the city, to find the suspended bodies of suicides. Whatever be the splendor of the surroundings, there is no excuse for this crime. The thunders of eternal destruction roll in the deep rumble of that gambling ten-pin alley, and as men come out to join the long procession of sin, all the drums of death beat the dead-march of a thousand souls. In one year, in the city of New York, there were seven million dollars sacrificed at the gaming table. Perhaps some of your friends have been smitten by it.

Look out for those agents of iniquity who tarry round about the hotels, and ask you: "Would you like to see the city?" "Yes." "Have you ever seen that splendid building up town?" "No." Then the villian will undertake to show you what he calls the "lions" and the "elephants," and after a young man, through morbid curiosity or through badness of soul, has seen the "lions" and the "elephants," he will be on enchanted ground. Look out for these men who move around the hotels with sleek hats, and patronizing air, and unaccountable interest about your welfare and entertainment. You are a fool if you can not see through it. They want your money. On Chestnut street, in Philadelphia, while I was living in that city, an incident occurred which was familiar to us there. A young man went into a gambling saloon, lost all his property, then blew his brains out, and before the blood was washed from the floor by the maid the comrades were shuffling cards again. You see there is more mercy in the highwayman for the belated traveler on whose body he heaps the stones, there is more mercy in the frost for the flower that it kills, there is more mercy in the hurricane that shivers the steamer on the Long Island coast, than there is mercy in the heart of a gambler for his victim.

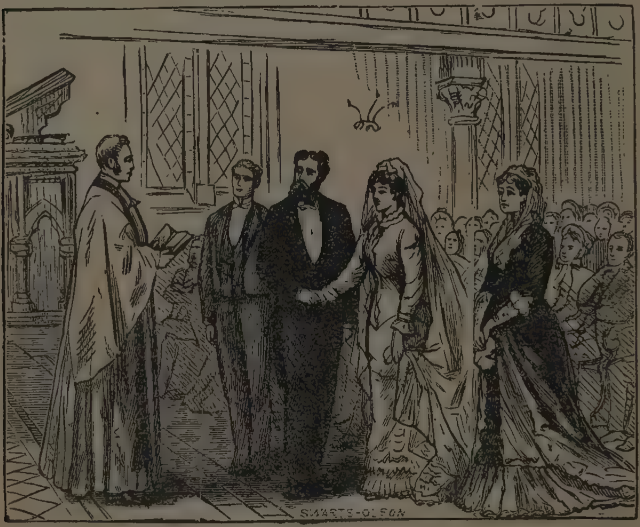
In the third watch of the night, also, drunkenness does its worst. The drinking will be respectable at 8 o'clock in the evening, a little flushed at 9, talkative and garrulous at 10, at 11 blasphemous, at 12 the hat falls off, at 1 the man falls to the floor asking for more drink. Strewn through the drinking saloons of the city, fathers, brothers, husbands, sons as good as you are by nature, perhaps better. In the high circles of society it is hushed up. A merchant prince, if he gets noisy and uncontrollable, is taken by his fellow-revelers, who try to get him to bed, or take him home, where he falls flat in the entry. Do not wake up the children. They have had disgrace enough. Do not let them know it. Hush it up. But sometimes it can not be hushed up, when the rum touches the brain and the man becomes thoroughly frenzied. Such a one came home, having been absent for some time and during his absence his wife had died, and she lay in the next room prepared for the obsequies, and he went in and dragged her by the locks, and shook her out of her shroud, and pitched her out of the window.

Oh! when rum touches the brain you can not hush it up. My friends, you see all round about you the need that something radical be done. You do not see the worst. In the midnight meetings in London a great multitude have been saved. We want a few hundred Christian men and women to come down from the highest circles of society to toil amid these wandering and destitute ones, and kindle up a light in the dark alley, even the gladness of heaven. Do not go wrapped in your fine furs and from your well-filled tables with the idea that pious talk is going to stop the gnawing of an empty stomach, or to warm stockingless feet. Take bread, take raiment, take medicine as well as take prayer. There is a great deal of common sense in what the poor woman said to the city missionary, when he was telling her how she ought to love God and serve him. "Oh," she said, "if you were as poor and cold as I am, and as hungry, you could think of nothing else." A great deal of what is called Christian work goes for nothing, for the simple reason it is not practical, as after the battle of Antietam a man got out of an ambulance with a bag of tracts, and he went distributing the tracts, and George Stuart, one of the best Christian men in this country, said to him: "What are you distributing tracts for now? There are three thousand men bleeding to death. Bind up their wounds, and then distribute the tracts."

We want more common sense in Christian work, taking the bread of this life in one hand and the bread of the next life in the other hand. No such inapt work as that done by the Christian man who, during the last war, went into a hospital with tracts, and, coming to the bed of a man whose legs had been amputated, gave him a tract on the sin of dancing! I rejoice before God that never are sympathetic words uttered, never a prayer offered, never a Christian alms-giving indulged in but it is blessed. There is a place in Switzerland, I have been told, where the utterance of one word will bring back a score of echoes; and I tell you that a sympathetic word, a kind word, a generous word, a helpful word, uttered in the dark places of the town, will bring back ten thousand echoes from all the thrones of heaven. Those who know by experience the tragedies in the third watch of the night I would not thrust back by one hard word. Take the bandage from your bruised soul, and put on it the soothing-salve of Christ's Gospel and of God's compassion. Many have come others are coming to God, tired of the sinful life. Cry up the news to heaven. Set all the bells ringing. Spread the banquet under the arches. Let the crowned heads come down and sit at the jubilee. I tell you there is more delight in heaven over one man who becomes reformed by the grace of God than over ninety and nine who never get off the track.

I could give you the history in a minute of one of the best friends I ever had. Outside of my own family I never had a better friend. He welcomed me to his home at the West. He was of splendid personal appearance, but he had an ardor of soul and a warmth of affection that made me love him like a brother. I saw men coming out of the saloons and gambling hells, and they surrounded my friend and they took him at the weak point, his social nature, and I saw him going down, and I had a fair talk with him—for I never yet saw a young man you could not talk with on the subject of his habits, if you talked to him in the right way. I said to him: " Why don't you give up your bad habits and become a Christian? " I remember now just how he looked, leaning over his counter, as he replied: "I wish I could. Oh, sir, I should like to be a Christian, but I have gone so far astray that I can't get back." So the time went on. After awhile the day of sickness came. I was summoned to his sick bed. I hastened. It took me but a very few moments to get there. I was surprised as I went in. I saw him in his ordinary dress, fully dressed, lying on the top of the bed. I gave him my hand, and he seized it convulsively and said: "Oh, how glad I am to see you! Sit down there." I sat down and he said: "Mr. Talmage, just where you sit now my mother sat last night. She has been dead twenty years. Now, I don't want you to think I am out of my mind, or that I am superstitious; but, sir, she sat there last night just as certainly as you sit there now—the same cap and apron and spectacles. It was my old mother—she sat there." Then he turned to his wife and said: "I wish you would take these strings off the bed; somebody is wrapping strings around me all the time. I wish you would stop that annoyance." She said: "There is nothing here." Then I saw it was delirium. He said: "Just where you sit now my mother sat, and she said: 'Roswell, I wish you would do better—I wish you would do better.' I said: 'Mother, I wish I could do better; I try to do better, but I can't. Mother, you used to help me; why can't you help me now?' And sir, I got out of bed, for it was a reality, and I went to her, and threw my arms around her neck, and I said: 'Mother, I will do better, but you must help; I can't do this alone.' I knelt down and prayed." That night his soul went to the Lord who made it. Arrangements were made for the obsequies. The question was raised whether they should bring him to the church. Somebody said: "You can not bring such a dissolute man as that into the church." I said: "You will bring him into the church; he stood by me when he was alive, and I will stand by him when he is dead. Bring him in." As I stood in the pulpit and saw them carrying the body up the aisle, I felt as if I could weep tears of blood. On one side of the pulpit sat his little child of 8 years, a sweet, beautiful little girl that I have seen him hug convulsively in his better moments. He put on her all jewels, all diamonds, and gave her all pictures and toys, and then he would go away as if hounded by an evil spirit, to his cups and the house of shame—a fool to the correction of the stocks. She looked up wonderingly. She knew not what it all meant. She was not old enough to understand the sorrow of an orphan child. On the other side of the pulpit sat the men who had ruined him; they were the men who had poured the wormwood into the orphan's cup; they were the men who had bound him hand and foot. I knew them. How did they seem to feel? Did they weep? No. Did they say: "What a pity that so generous a man should be destroyed?" No. Did they sigh repentingly over what they had done? No; they sat there, looking as vultures look at the carcase of a lamb whose heart they had ripped out. So they sat and looked at the coffin lid, and I told them of the judgment of God upon those who had destroyed their fellows. Did they reform? I was told they were in the places of iniquity the night after my friend was laid in Oakwood Cemetery, and they blasphemed and they drank. Oh, how merciless men are, especially after they have destroyed you. Do not look to men for comfort or help. Look to God.

But there is a man who will not reform. He says: "I won't reform." Well then how many acts are there in a tragedy? I believe five. Act the first of the tragedy—A young man starting off from home. Parents and sisters weeping to have him go. Wagon rising over the hill. Farewell kiss flung back. Ring the bell and let the curtain fall. Act the second: The marriage altar. Full organ.- Bright lights. Long white veil trailing through the aisle. Prayer and congratulation, and exclamation of "How well she looks!" Act the third: A woman waiting for staggering steps. Old garments stuck into the broken window pane. Marks of hardship on the face. The biting of the nails of bloodless fingers. Neglect and cruelty and despair. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop. Act the fourth: Three graves in a dark place—grave of the child that died for lack of medicine, grave of the wife that died of a broken heart, grave of the man that died of dissipation. Oh! what a blasted heath with three graves! Plenty of weeds, but no flowers. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop. Act the fifth: A destroyed soul's eternity. No light; no music; no hope; anguish coiling its serpents around the heart; blackness of darkness forever. But I can not look any longer. Woe! woe! I close my eyes to this last act of the tragedy. Quick! quick! ring the bell and let the curtain drop. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart rejoice in the days of thy youth; but know thou that for all these things God will bring you into judgment." "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is death."



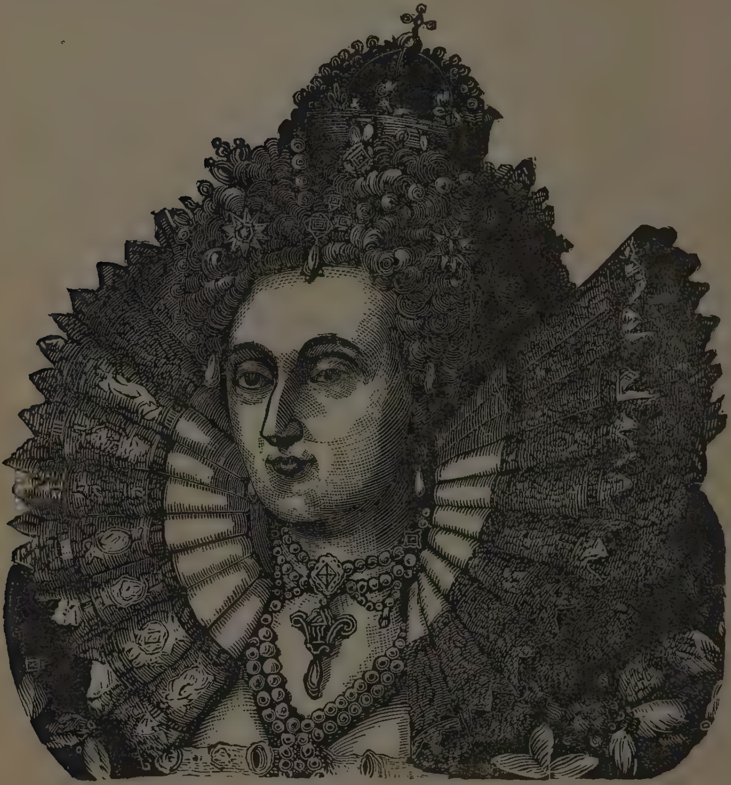
THE MARRIAGE ALTAR.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BABYLONIAN FEAST.

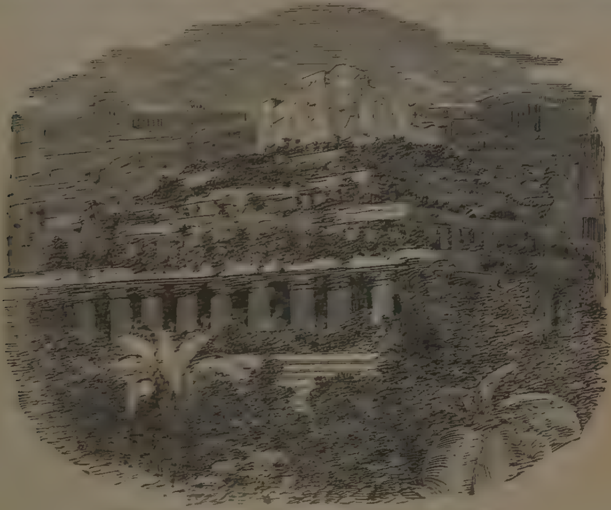
Feasting has been known in all ages. It was one of the most exciting times in English history when Queen Elizabeth visited Lord Leicester at Kenilworth Castle. The moment of her arrival was considered so important that all the clocks of the castle were stopped, so that the hands might point to that one moment as being the most significant of all. She was greeted at the gate with floating islands, and torches, and the thunder of cannon, and fireworks that set the night ablaze, and a great burst of music that lifted the whole scene into perfect enchantment. Then she was introduced into a dining-hall the luxuries of which astonished the world; four hundred servants waited upon the guests; the entertainment cost five thousand dollars each day. Lord Liecester made that great supper in Kenilworth Castle.

Cardinal Wolsey entertained the French Embassadors at Hampton Court. The best cooks in all the land prepared for the banquet; purveyors went out and traveled all the kingdom over to find spoils for the table. The time came. The guests were kept during the day hunting in the King's park, so that their appetites might be keen; and then in the evening, to the sound of the trumpeters, they were introduced into a hall hung with silk and cloth of gold, and there were tables a glitter with imperial plate, and laden with the rarest meats, and ablush with the costliest wines;and when the second course of the feast came it was found that the articles of food had been fashioned into the shape of men, birds and beasts, and groups dancing, and jousting parties riding against each other with ances. Lords and princes and embassadors out of cups filled to the brim drank the health, first of the King of England, and next of the King of France. Cardinal Woolsey prepared that great supper at Hampton Court.



QUEEN ELIZABETH.

The Babylonian feast was a more exciting banquet. Night was about to come down upon the city. The shadow of her two hundred and fifty six towers began to lengthen. The Euphrates rolled on, touched by the fiery splendors of the setting sun, and gates of brass, burnished and glittering, opened and shut like doors of flame. The hanging gardens of Babylon, wet with heavy dew, began to pour from starlit flowers and dripping leaf a fragrance for many miles around. The streets and squares were lighted for dance and frolic and promenade. The theaters and galleries of art invited the wealth and pomp and grandeur of the city to rare entertainments. Scenes of riot and wassail were mingled in every street, and godless mirth and outrageous excess and splendid wickedness came to the King's palace to do their mightiest deeds of darkness. A royal feast to-night at the King's palace! Rushing up to the gates are chariots upholstered with precious cloths from Dedan and drawn by fire-eyed horses from Togarmah that rear and neigh in the grasp of the charioteers; while a thousand lords dismount, and women dressed in all the splendor of Syrian emerald, and the color blending of agate, and the chasteness of coral, and the somber glory of Tyrian purple, and princely embroideries brought from afar



THE HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON.

by camels across the desert and by ships of Tarshish across the sea. Open wide the gates and let the guests come in! The chamberlains and cup-bearers are all ready. Hark to the rustle of the silks and to the carol of the music! See the blaze of the jewels! Lift the banners! Fill the cups! Clap the cymbals! Blow the trumpets! Let the night go by with song and dance and ovation; and let that Babylonish tongue be palsied that will not say: "Oh, King Belshazzar, live forever."

Ah, my readers! It was not any common banquet to which these great people came. All parts of the earth had sent their richest viands to that table. Brackets and chandeliers flashed their light upon the tankards of burnished gold. Fruits, ripe and luscious, in baskets of silver entwined with leaves, plucked from royal conservatories. Vases inlaid with emerald and ridged with exquisite traceries, filled with nuts that were threshed from forests of distant lands. Wine brought from the royal vats, foaming in the decanters and bubbling in the chalices. Tufts of cassia and frankincense wafting their sweetness from wall and table. Gorgeous banners unfolding in the breeze that came through the opened window, bewitched with the perfume of hanging gardens. Fountains rising up from inclosures of ivory in jets of crystal, to fall in clustering rain of diamonds and pearls. Statues of mighty men looking down from niches in the wall upon crowns and shields brought from subdued empires. Idols of wonderful work standing on pedestals of precious stones. Embroideries drooping about the windows and wrapping pillars of cedar, and drifting on floor inlaid with ivory and agate. Music, mingling with the thrum of harps, and the clash of cymbals, and the blast of trumpets in one wave of transport that went rippling along the wall and breathing among the garlands, and pouring down the corridors, and thrilling the souls of a thousand banqueters. The signal is given, and the lords and ladies, the mighty men and women of the land, come around the table. Pour out the wine! Let foam and bubble kiss the rim! Hoist every one his cup and drink to the sentiment; "O, King Belshazzar, live forever!" Bestarred headband and carcanet of royal beauty gleam to the uplifted chalices, as again and again and again they are emptied. Away with care from the palace. Tear royal dignity to tatters. Pour out more wine! Give us more light, wilder music, sweeter perfume! Lord shouts to lord, captain ogles to captain. Goblets clash, decanters rattle. There come in the obscene song and the drunken hiccough, and the slavering lip and the guffaw of idiotic laughter, bursting from the lips of princes, flushed, reeling, bloodshot; while mingling with it all I hear: "Huzza, huzza, for great Belshazzar!"

What is that on the plastering of the wall? Is it a spirit? Is it a phantom? Is it God? The music stops. The goblets fall from the nerveless grasp. There is a thrill. There is a start. There is a thousand-voiced shriek of horror. Let Daniel be brought in to read that writing. He comes in. He reads it: "Weighed in the balances and found wanting." Meanwhile the Assyrians, who for two years had been laying a siege to that city, took advantage of that carousal and came in. I hear the feet of the conquerors on the palace stairs. Massacre rushes in with a thousand gleaming knives. Death bursts upon the scene; and I shut the door of that banqueting hall, for I do not want to look. There is nothing there but torn banners and broken wreaths, and the slush of upset tankards, and the blood of murdered women, and the kicked and tumbled carcase of a dead king. For "in that night was Belshazzar slain."

I learn, from reading the writing on the wall, that when God writes anything a man had better read it as it is. Daniel did not misinterpret or modify the handwriting on the wall. It is all foolishness to expect a minister of the gospel to preach always things that the people like or the people choose. Shall I tell you of the dignity of human nature? Shall I tell you of the wonders that our race has accomplished? "Oh, no,'' you say, "tell me of the message that came from God." If there is any handwriting on the wall it is this lesson: "Repent, accept of Christ and be saved.'' I might write of a great many other things, but that is the message, and so I declare it. Jesus never flattered those to whom he preached. He said to those who did wrong and who were offensive in his sight: "Ye generation of vipers! Ye whited sepulchers! How can ye escape the damnation of hell?'' Paul the Apostle preached before a man who was not ready to hear him preach. What subject did he take? Did he say: "Oh, you are a good man, a very fine man, a very noble man?'' No; he preached of righteousness to a man who was unrighteous; of temperance to a man who was the victim of bad appetites; of the judgment to come to a man who was unfit for it. So we must always declare the message that happens to come to us. Daniel must read it as it is. A minister preached before James I. of England, who was James VI. of Scotland. What subject did he take? The king was noted all over the world for being unsettled and wavering in his ideas. What did the minister preach about to this man who was James I. of England and James VI. of Scotland? He took for his text: "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." —James I., 6. Hugh Latimer offended the king by a sermon he preached, and the king said "Come and apologize." "I will," said Hugh Latimer. So the day was appointed, and the king's chapel was full of lords and dukes, and the mighty men and women of the country, for Hugh Latimer was to apologize. He began his sermon by saying: "Hugh Latimer, bethink thee! Thou art in the presence of thine earthly king, who can destroy thy body! But bethink thee, Hugh Latimer, that thou art in the presence of the King of heaven and earth, who can destroy both body and soul in hell fire. O king, cursed be thy crimes."

There is a great difference between the opening of the banquet of sin and its close. Young man, if you had looked in upon the banquet in the first few hours you would have wished you had been invited there and could sit at the feast. "O, the grandeur of Belshazzar's feast," you would have said; but you look in at the close of the banquet and your blood curdles with horror. The King of Terrors has there a ghastlier banquet; human blood is the wine and dying groans are the music. Sin has made itself a king in the earth. It has crowned itself. It has spread a banquet. It invites all the world to come to it. It has hung in its banqueting hall the spoils of all kingdoms and the banners of all nations. It has gathered from all music. It has strewn from its wealth the table and floors and arches. And yet how often is that banquet broken up, and how horrible is its end! Ever and anon there is a handwriting on the wall. A king falls. A great culprit is arrested. The knees of wickedness knocked together. God's judgment, like an armed host, breaks in upon the banquet, and that night is Belshazzar, the King of the Chaldeans, slain. Here is a young man who says: "I can not see why they make such a fuss about the intoxicating cup. Why, it is exhilarating. It makes me feel well. I can talk better, think better, feel better. I can not see why people have such a prejudice against it." A few years pass on and he wakes up and finds himself in the clutches of an evil habit which he tries to break, but can not; and he cries out: "O Lord God, help me!" It seems as though God would not hear his prayer, and in an agony of body and soul he cries out: "It biteth like a serpent and it stingeth like an adder!" How bright it was at the start! how black it was at the last!

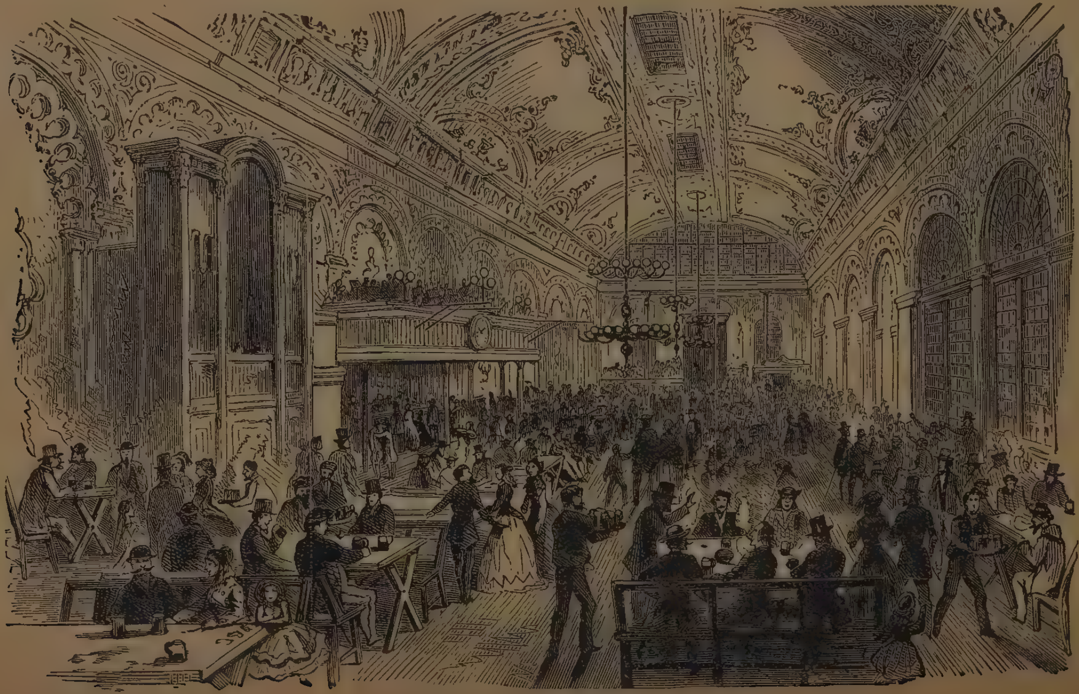
Here is a man who begins to read French novels. "They are so charming," he says: "I will go out and see for myself whether all these things are so." He opens the gate of a sinful life. He goes in. A sinful sprite meets him with her wand. She waves her wand and it is all enchantment. Why, it seems as if the angels of God had poured out phials of perfume in the atmosphere. As he walks on he finds the hills becoming more radiant with foliage, and the ravines more resonant with the falling water. O what a charming landscape he sees! But that sinful sprite with her wand meets him again; but now she reverses the wand, and all the enchantment is gone. The cup is full of poison. The fruit turns to ashes. All the leaves of the bower are forked tongues of hissing serpents. The flowing fountains fall back in a dead pool, stenchful with corruption. The luring songs become curses and screams of demoniac laughter. Lost spirits gather about him, and feel for his heart, and beckon him on with: "Hail, brother! Hail, blasted spirit, hail!" He tries to get out. He comes to the front door, where he entered, and tries to push it back, but the door turns against him. Sin may open bright as the morning; it closes dark as the night.

We learn further from this writing that death sometimes breaks in upon a banquet. Why did he not go down to the prison in Babylon? There were people there that would like to have died. I suppose there were men and women in torture in that city who would have welcomed death. But he comes to the palace and just at the time when the mirth is dashing to the tip-top pitch death breaks in at the banquet. We have often seen the same thing illustrated. Here is a young man just come from college. He is kind. He is loving. He is enthusiastic. He is eloquent. By one spring he may bound to heights toward which many men have been struggling for years. A profession opens before him. He is established in the law. His friends cheer him. Eminent men encourage him. After awhile you may see him standing in the American Senate, or moving a popular assemblage by his eloquence as trees are moved in a whirlwind. Some night he retires early. A fever is on him. Delirium like a reckless charioteer seizes the reins of his intellect. Father and mother stand by and see the tides of life going out to the great ocean. The banquet is coming to an end. The lights of thought and mirth and eloquence are being extinguished. The garlands are snatched from the brow. The vision is gone. Death at the banquet. We saw the same thing on a larger scale illustrated at the last war in this country. Our whole nation had been sitting at a national banquet—North, South, East and West. What grain was there but we grew it on our hills? What invention was there but our rivers must turn the new wheel and rattle the strange shuttle? What warm furs but our trades must bring them from the Arctic? What fish but our nets must sweep them for the markets? What music but it must sing in our halls? What eloquence but it must speak in our Senates? Ho! to the national banquet reaching from mountain to mountain and from sea to sea! To prepare that banquet the sheepfold and the aviaries of the country sent their best treasures. The orchards piled up on the table their sweetest fruits. The presses burst out with new wines. To sit at that table came the yoemanry of New Hampshire, and the lumbermen of Maine, and the tanned Carolinian from the rice swamps, and the harvesters of Wisconsin, and the Western emigrant from the pines of Oregon, and we were all brothers—brothers at a banquet. Suddenly the feast ended. What meant those mounds thrown up at Chickahominy, Shiloh, Atlanta, Gettysburg, South Mountain? What meant those golden grain fields turned into a pasturing ground for cavalry horses? What meant the corn fields gullied with the wheels of the heavy supply trains? Why those rivers of tears, those lakes of blood? God was angry. Justice must come. A handwriting on the wall! The nation has been weighed and found wanting. Darkness! Darkness! Woe to the North! Woe to the South! Woe to the East! Woe to the West! Death at the banquet!

We also learn that the destruction of the vicious and of those who despise God will be very sudden. The wave of mirth had dashed to the highest point when that Assyrian army broke through. It was unexpected. Suddenly, almost always, comes the doom of those who despise God and defy the laws of men. How was it at the Deluge? Do you suppose it came through a long northeast storm, so that people for days before were sure it was coming? No; I suppose the morning was bright; that calmness brooded on the waters; that beauty sat enthroned on the hills, when suddenly the heavens burst, and the mountains sank like anchors into the sea, that dashed clear over the Andes and the Himalayas. The Red Sea was divided. The Egyptians tried to cross it. There could be no danger. The Israelites had just gone through. Where they had gone why not the Egyptians? Oh, it was such a beautiful walking-place! A pavement of tinged shells and pearls, and on either side two great walls of water—solid. There can be no danger. Forward, great host of the Egyptians! Clap the cymbals and blow the trumpets of victory! After them! We will catch them yet, and they shall be destroyed! But the walls of solidified water begin to tremble. They rock! They fall! The rushing waters! The shriek of drowning men! The swimming of the war-horses in vain for the shore! The strewing of the great host on the bottom of the sea, or pitched by the angry wave on the beach—a battered, bruised and loathsome wreck! Suddenly destruction came. One half hour before they could not have believed it. Destroyed and without remedy. I am just setting forth a fact when you have noticed as well as I. Ananias comes to the apostle. The apostle says: "Did you sell the land for so much?" He says: "Yes." It was a lie. Dead! As quick as a flash! Sapphira, his wife, comes in. "Did you sell the land for so much?" "Yes." It was a lie, and just as quick she was dead! God's judgments are upon those who despise and defy him. They come suddenly.

The destroying angel went through Egypt. Do you suppose that any of the people knew that he was coming? Did they hear the flap of his great wing? No, no. Suddenly, unexpectedly he came. Skilled sportsmen do not like to shoot a bird standing on a sprig near by. If they are skilled they pride themselves on taking it on the wing, and they will wait till it starts. Death is an old sportsman, and he loves to take them on the wing.

Are there any of my readers who are unprepared for the eternal world? Are there any who have been living without God and without hope? Let me say to you that you had better accept of the Lord Jesus Christ, lest suddenly your last chance be gone. The lungs will cease to breathe, the heart will stop. The time will come when you shall go no more to the office, or to the store, or to the shop. Nothing will be left but death, and judgment, and eternity. Oh, flee to God this hour! If there be one who has wandered far away from Christ, though he may not have heard the call of the gospel for many a year, I invite him now to come and be saved. Flee from thy sin! Flee to the stronghold of the gospel! I invite you to a grander banquet than any I have mentioned. My Lord, the King, is the banqueter. Angels are the cupbearers. All the redeemed are the guests. The halls of eternal love, frescoed with light and paved with joy, and curtained with unfading beauty, are the banqueting place. The harmonies of eternity are the music. The chalices of heaven are the plate; and I am one of the servants coming out with both hands filled with invitations, scattering them everywhere: and of that, for yourselves, you might break the seal of the invitation and read the words written in red ink of blood by the tremulous hand of a dying Christ: "Come now, for all things are ready." After this day has rolled by and the night has come may you have rosy sleep guarded by him who never slumbers. May you awake in the morning strong and well. But, oh, art thou a despiser of God? Is the coming night the last night on earth? Shouldst thou be awakened in the night by something, thou knowest not what, and there be shadows floating in the room, and a handwriting on the wall, and you feel that your last hour is come, and there be a fainting at the heart and a tremor in the limb, and a catching of the breath—then thy doom will be but an echo of the words: In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.



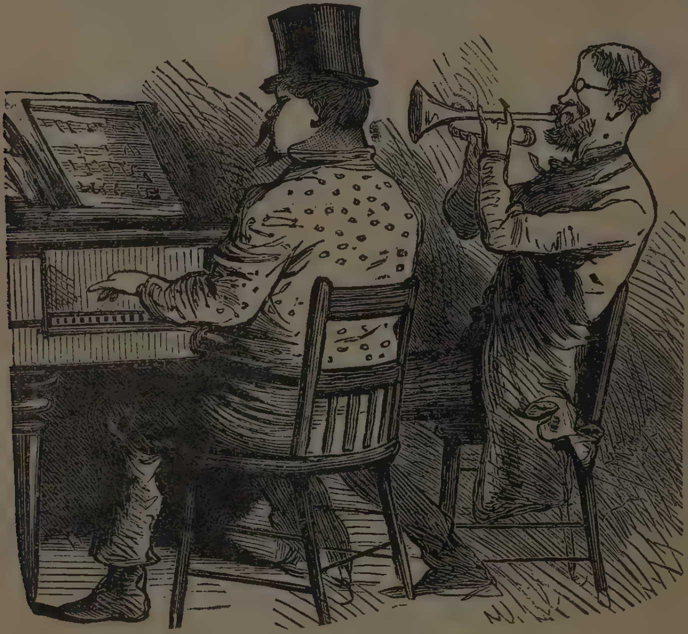
MUSIC HALL AND BEER GARDEN.

CHAPTER V.

HIGH LICENSE, THE MONOPOLY OF ABOMINATION.

We are at a point in reformatory movements in this country where it is proposed to restrain or control or stop the traffic of ardent spirits by compelling the merchant thereof to pay a large sum, say five hundred dollars or one thousand dollars as a license. It is said that this will have a tendency to close up all the small drinkeries which curse our cities, and only a few men can afford to sell intoxicating drink. This money, raised by a high license, it is said, will help support the poorhouses, where there are widows and orphans sent there by the dissipations of husbands and fathers. This high tax will help support the prisons in which men are incarcerated for committing crimes while drunk. This high tax will help support the Court of Oyer and Terminer, whose judges, and attorneys, and constables, and juries, and police stations, and court rooms find their chief employment in the arraignment, trial and condemnation of those who offend the law while in a state of insobriety. How any man or woman in favor of the great temperance reform can be so hoodwinked as not to understand that this high license movement is the surrender of all the temperance reformation for which good men and women have been struggling for the last sixty years, is to me an amazement that eclipses everything.

"High License is the Monopoly of Abomination." We must realize as by mathematical demonstration, that the one result of this high license movement, and the one result of the closing of small establishments—if that were the result—and the opening of a few large establishments, will be to make rum-selling and rum-drinking highly respectable. These drinkeries in our own cities are so disgusting that a man will not risk his reputation by going in them; and if a young man should be found coming out from one of those low establishments he would lose his place in the store.



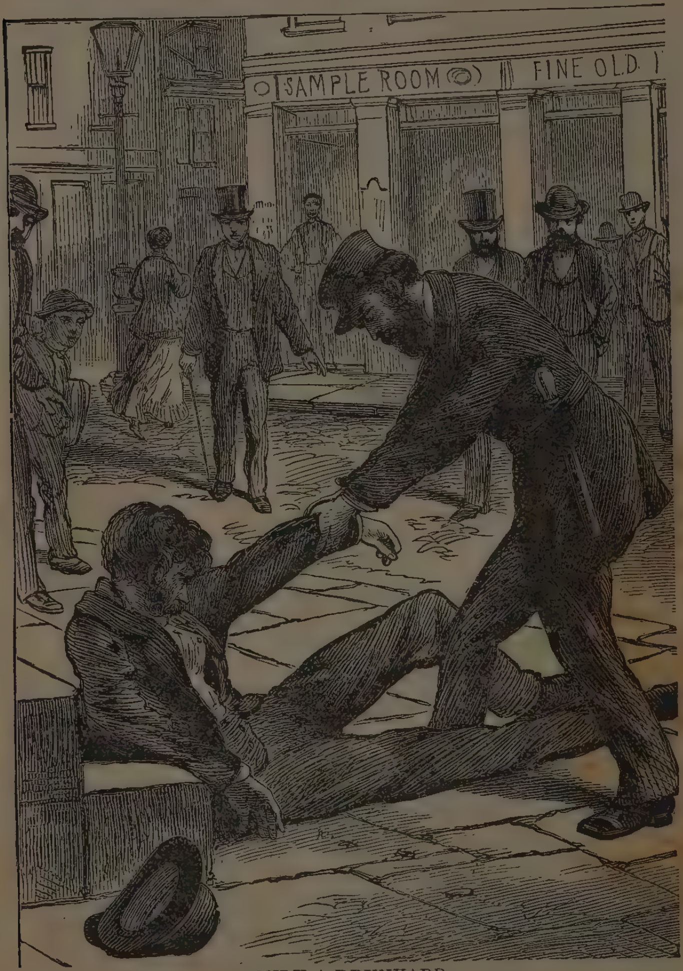
A CONCERT SALOON BAND.

Now, suppose all these small establishments are closed up and that then you open the palaces of inebriation down on the avenues. It is not the rookeries of alcoholism that do the worst work; they are only the last stopping-places on the road to death. Where did that bloated, ulcerous, wheezing wretch that staggers out of a rum-hole get his habits started? At glittering restaurant or bar-room of first-class hotel, where it was fashionable to go. Ah! my friends, it seems to me the disposition is to stop these small establishments, which are only the rash on the skin of the body politic, and then to gather all the poison and the pus and the matteration into a few great carbuncles which mean death. I say, give us the rash rather than the carbuncles.

Here you will have a splendid liquor establishment. Masterpieces of painting on the wall. Cut glass on silver platter. Upholstery like a Turkish harem. Uniformed servants to open the door, uniformed servants to take your hat and cane. Adjoining rooms with luxuriant divan on which you can recline when taken mysteriously ill after too much champagne, cognac, or old Otard. All the phantasmagoria and bewitchery of art thrown around this Herod of massacre, this Moloch of consumed worshippers, this Juggernaut of crushed millions. This high license movement strikes at the heart of the best homes in America; it proposes the fattest lambs for its sacrifice; it is at war with the most beautiful domestic circles in America. Tell to all the philanthropists who are trying to make the world better, and let journalists tell it by pen and by type that this day in the presence of my Maker and my Judge I stamp on this high-license movement as the monopoly of abomination. It proposes to pave with honor, to pillar with splendor, and guard with monopolistic advantage a business, which has made the ground hollow under England, Ireland, Scotland, and America with the catacombs of slaughtered drunkards.

I am opposed to this high license because it is anti-American, anti-common sense, anti-demonstrated facts, and anti-Christian. Our revolutionary fathers wrote first with pen and then with sword, first in black ink and then in red ink, that all men are equal before the law. Impartiality written on the Declaration of Independence, on the Constitution of the United States, and over the door of our State and National capitols. Now, how then dare you propose for five hundred dollars or one thousand dollars to let one man sell sweetened dynamite, while you deny to his fellow the right, because he cannot raise more than one hundred dollars or more than fifty dollars, or cannot raise anything? Are the small dealers in this festive liquid to have no rights? I plead for equal rights, the first American doctrine. I plead for the rights of those men who are doing a small, prudent, economical business in selling extract of logwood, strychnine, and blue vitriol! What right have you to say to these wealthy men standing beside their great conflagration of temptation, "Go ahead," while you deny the poor fellows in the traffic the right so much as to strike a lucifer match? Now, this high-license movement is property qualification in its most offensive shape. Why do you not carry it out in other things? Why do you not stop all these bakers until the bakers can pay a one thousand dollar license? Why do you not shut up all the butchers' shops until the butchers can pay one thousand dollars or five hundred dollars? Why do you not stop these thread-and-needle stores and the small dry-goods establishments, except that a man pay five hundred dollars or one thousand dollars? "Oh," you say, "that is different." How is it different? "Well," you say, "the sale of bread and meat and clothes does no damage, while the sale of whiskey does damage." Ah, my brother, you have surrendered the whole subject! If rum-selling is right, let all have the right, and if it is wrong, five hundred dollars or one thousand dollars are only a bribe to government to give a few men a privilege which it denies to the great masses of the people. Why do you not carry out this idea of licensing only those who can pay a large license? Give them all the privilege.

So they propose to compromise this matter. They say a prohibitory law cannot be executed, and, therefore, we had better not have any such law on the statute book. Will you tell me, my friends, which one of our laws is fully executed? We have a law against Sabbath-breaking. Millions of people break that law every Sunday. We have laws against blasphemy. Sometimes the air is lurid with imprecation. We have laws against theft, but you have highwaymen and burglars filling your jails and penitentiaries, and thousands of people outside of jail who ought to be inside. Now, why not throw overboard these laws, if they are not executed fully, and let us give for a high license to a few men all the privilege of swearing and stealing and murder? And the sin of murder. Why, your law against it is a failure. Murder on Long Island, murder in Illinois, murder in Pennsylvania, murder all over. It is almost impossible to convict one of the desperadoes. He proves an *alibi* right away, or he did it under emotional insanity. Court-house full of sympathizers, and when he is cleared the crowd follow him down the street thinking he ought to be sent to Congress! Your law against murder is a failure. Now we have got to stop these clumsy assassins who kill people with car-hooks, and Paris green, and dull knives, and having a high license, say $10,000 or $20,000, give to a few men the privilege of genteelly and skillfully and gracefully putting their victims out of their worldly misfortunes. You will never stop murder in this country until you put a high license upon it and let a few men do all the killing. But, my friends, all irony aside, you see that if rum selling is right we all ought to have the right, and if it is wrong, five million dollars paid down in hard cash for one license ought to purchase no immunity. High license is anti-common-sense. You know very well one business has no right to despoil other businesses. A manufacturer went down South and established himself in Georgia. Somebody asked him why he built his establishment there. He said, "Because they voted to have no license here." That honest manufacturer knew what you and I ought to know, that the liquor traffic is in antagonism with every other business. If the million of dollars which go into that business went for lawful and healthful styles of business there would come to the agricultural and manufacturing and commercial interests of this country a boom of prosperity a hundred and fifty per cent. greater than we have had.



ONLY A DRUNKARD.

Oh, that the working people of America understood that it is time for them by their votes to keep at home the driveling pot-house politicians in Albany and Harrisburg, who vote down prohibition. Do you not know that if you have $2 as wages now a day you would have $4; if you have $1000 salary you would have $2000; if you have $10,000 income now you would have $20,000? The rum traffic puts its clutch this moment upon the neck of every merchant, mechanic, artist, and farmer in America. You pay for its destructive work by your honest sweat and by the deprivation of your households of many comforts. Oh, for an hour of the magnificent courage of Iowa, whose Legislature sometime ago passed an out-and-out prohibition law, and whose governor had grace and greatness enough to sign it. Lead on, O Western State, in this glorious reform! Our own beloved New York State may be the last to fall into line, but come she will. After a few more thousands of our homes are despoiled by the rum traffic, after a few more thousand broken hearts, after a few more thousand of the noblest intellects of this age are sacrificed, after a few more years the distilleries shall have insulted the heavens with their uprolling stench, the tide will turn, and all good people rising up will lay hold of the strength of Almighty God and hurl into the perdition from which it smoked up this sweltering and putrefying curse of nations. Yes, I have to tell you that this high-license movement is antagonized by all the demonstrated facts in the case. I am amazed to hear intelligent men of our county talk as though this were a new plan that we are to try just once. It is an old carcass. It first died in Missouri; then it died in Kansas, the second death, and it has been tried over and over, and over again, and has always been a flat and disgusting failure. Men of America, hear that! It was tried in Iowa, a thousand-dollar license. A prominent paper of Iowa says: "Experiments being made with high license in Iowa as a temperance method are fast proving what a cheat it is. Des Moines has tried a thousand-dollar license only to find it has increased the number of its saloons and the daily cases of drunkenness. Other cities in Iowa have tried it with similar result. High license tried again and again, and again, and yet here we, in the State of New York, are so stultifying ourselves as to propose that the farce be re-enacted. The hardest blow the temperance reformation has had in this century has been in the fact that some reformers have halted under the delusion of this high-license movement. You know what it is. It is the white flag of truce sent out from Alcoholism to Prohibition to make the battle pause long enough to get the army of decanters and demijohns better organized. Away with that flag of truce, or I will fire on it. Between these two armies, there can be no truce. On the one side are God and sobriety and the best interests of the world, and on the other side is the sworn enemy of all righteousness, and either rum must be defeated or the Church of God and civilization. What are you trying to compromise with? Oh, this black destroying archangel of all diabolism, putting one wing to the Pacific, putting the other wing to the Atlantic coast, its filthy claws clutching into the torn and bleeding heart-strings of the nation as it cries out, "How long, O Lord, how long?" Compromise with it! You had better compromise with the panther in his jungle, with the cyclone in its flight, with an Egyptian plague as it blotches an empire, with Apollon, for whom this evil is recruiting officer, quarter-master, and commander-in-chief. Oh, my friends, let us fight this battle out on the old line, for victory is coming as surely as right is right, and wrong is wrong, and falsehood is false, and truth is truth, and God is God. Can it be that you are so deaf that you cannot hear in the distance the rumbling of the on-coming chariots of victory? Three hundred and twenty thousand votes in Ohio for prohibition. Kansas on the right side. Iowa on the right side. Alabama and Georgia on the right side.

Fifteen legislatures of the United States lately discussing the temperance question. Two hundred and forty-six of the townships of Massachusetts out of two hundred and fifty-six proclaimed for no license. In all the State of Maine no one signboard out announcing the sale of strong drink, so that if in any place it is sold it is a pronounced crime. In our own monopoly-ridden New York Legislature a few weeks ago we came within three votes of having the choice of prohibition given to the people. The liquor traffic so panic-struck that it is at Washington trying to get the Constitution altered, so that prohibitory laws, if passed, as they will be passed all over the land, can be pronounced unconstitutional. Some time since the Congress of the United States demolishing the bonded whiskey bill by one hundred and eighty-six votes to eighty-three, although the liquor traffic had expended $700,000 to buy spectacles through which our rulers might see things in the right light. Oh, I tell the politicians of America, I tell the leaders of our beautiful Republican party and of our glorious Democracy that the temperance movement is going to hold the balance of the power in this country, and decide who shall be the Mayors, and the Governors, and the Congressmen, and the Presidents. I expect to live to see a President of the United States elected on a prohibition platform. Better get off the track before the morning express train comes down with the women's temperance societies, and the Sons of Temperance, and the Good Samaritans, and the Good Templars, and the long train of Christians and philanthopists and reformers. Clear the track! The cow-catcher will be all piled up with smashed decanters, and the staves of beer-barrels, and the splinters of high-license platforms, and the rails with people who sat on the fence, and all the machinations and briberies and outrages of all Christendom. The time will come when there will be only ten decanters left, and they will be set up at the end of an alley like ten pins, and some reformer will take the round ball of prohibition and he will give one roll, but it will be a ten strike. My friends, this subject looked at from the side of worldly reform is so bright; but looked at from the side of Christian reform is absolutely certain. God is going to destroy drunkenness. Is there a man who doubts that God is stronger than the devil?

CHAPTER VI.

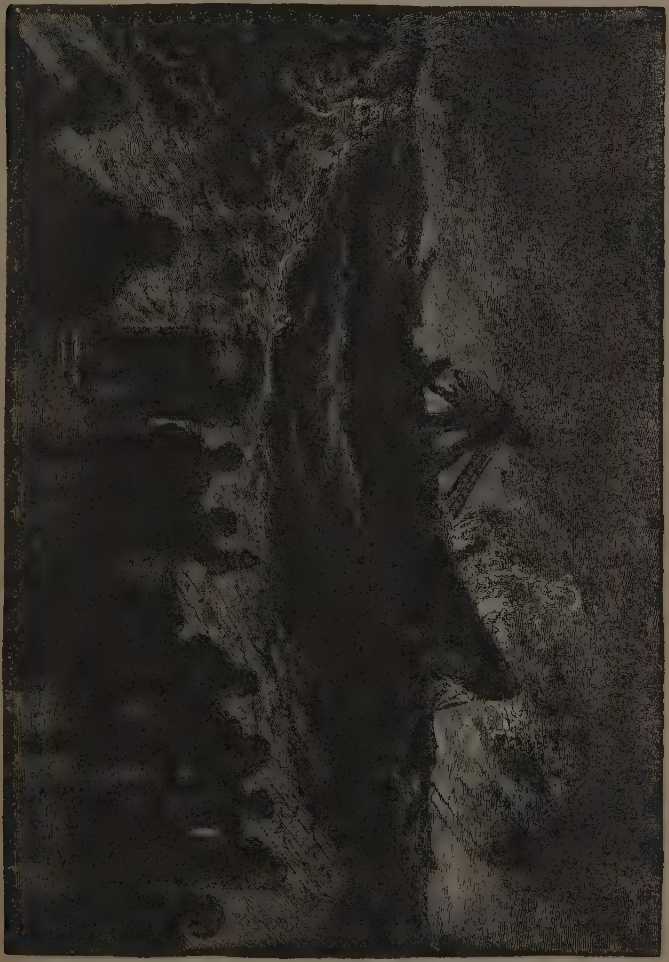
INTEMPERANCE.

Noah did the best and the worst thing for the world. He built an ark against the deluge of water, but introduced a deluge against which the human race has ever since been trying to build an ark—the deluge of drunkenness. In the opening chapters of the Bible we hear his staggering steps. Shem and Japhet tried to cover up the disgrace, but there he is, drunk on wine at a time in the history of the world when, to say the least, there was no lack of water.

Inebriation having entered the world, has not retreated. Abigail, the fair and heroic wife who saved the flocks of Nabal, her husband, from confiscation by invaders, goes home at night and finds him so intoxicated she can not tell him the story of his narrow escape. Uriah came to see David, and David got him drunk, and paved the way for the despoliation of a household. Even the church bishops needed to be charged to be sober and not given to too much wine; and so familiar were the people of Bible times with the staggering and falling motion of the inebriate, that Isaiah, when he comes to describe the final dislocation of worlds says: "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard.

Ever since apples and grapes and wheat grew the world has been tempted to unhealthful stimulants. But the intoxicants of the olden time were an innocent beverage, a harmless orangeade, a quiet syrup, a peaceful soda water, as compared with the liquids of modern inebriation, into which a madness, and a fury, and a gloom, and a fire, and a suicide, and a retribution have mixed and mingled. Fermentation was always known, but it was not until a thousand years after Christ that distillation was invented.

While we must confess that some of the ancient arts have been lost, the Christian era is superior to all others in the bad eminence of whisky and rum and gin. The modern drunk is a hundred-fold worse than the ancient drunk. Noah in his intoxication became imbecile, but the victims of modern alcoholism have to struggle with whole menageries of wild beasts and jungles of hissing serpents and perditions of blaspheming demons. An arch-fiend arrived in our world, and he built an invisible cauldron of temptation. He built that cauldron strong and stout for all ages and all nations. First he squeezed into the cauldron the juices of the forbidden fruit of Paradise. Then he gathered for it a distillation from the harvest fields and the orchards of the hemispheres. Then he poured into this cauldron capsicum, and copperas, and logwood, and deadly nightshade, and assault and battery, and vitriol, and opium, and rum, and murder, and sulphuric acid, and theft, and potash, and cochineal, and red carrots, and poverty, and death, and hops. But it was a dry compound, and it must be moistened, and it must be liquefied, and so the arch-fiend poured into that cauldron the tears of centuries of orphanage and widowhood, and he poured in the blood of twenty thousand assassinations. And then the arch-fiend took a shovel that he had brought up from the furnaces beneath, and he put that shovel into this great cauldron and began to stir, and the cauldron began to heave, and rock, and boil, and sputter, and hiss, and smoke, and the nations gathered around it with cups and tankards and demijohns and kegs, and there was enough for all, and the arch-fiend cried: "Aha! champion fiend am I. Who has done more than I have for coffins and grave-yards and prisons and insane asylums, and the populating of the lost world? And when this cauldron is emptied, I'll fill it again, and I'll stir it again, and it will smoke again, and that smoke will join another smoke—the smoke of a torment that ascendeth forever and ever."



I DROVE FIFTY SHIPS ON THE ROCKS OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

"I drove fifty ships on the rocks of Newfoundland and the Skerries and the Goodwins. I defeated the Northern army at Fredricksburg. I have ruined more senators than will gather next winter in the national councils. I have ruined more lords than will be gathered in the House of Peers. The cup out of which I ordinarily drink is a bleached human skull, and the upholstery of my palace is so rich a crimson because it is dyed in human gore, and the mosaic of my floors is made up of the bones of children dashed to death by drunken parents, and my favorite music—sweeter than Te Deum or triumphal march—my favorite music is the cry of daughters turned out at midnight on the street because father has come home from the carousal, and the seven-hundred-voiced shriek of the sinking steamer because the captain was not himself when he put the ship on the wrong course. Champion fiend am I! I have kindled more fires, I have wrung out more agonies, I have stretched out more midnight shadows, I have opened more Golgothas, I have rolled more juggernauts, I have damned more souls than any other emissary of diabolism."

Drunkenness is the greatest evil of this nation, and it takes no logical process to prove that a drunken nation cannot long be a free nation. I call your attention to the fact that drunkenness is not subsiding, certainly that it is not at a standstill, but that it is on an onward march, and it is a double quick. Where there was one drunken home there are ten drunken homes. Where there was one drunkard's grave there are twenty drunkards' graves. According to the United States Government figures, in 1840 there were 23,000,000 gallons of beer sold. Last year there were 551,000,000 gallons. According to the governmental figures, in the year 1840 there were 5,000,000 gallons of wine sold. Last year there were 25,000,000 gallons of wine. It is on the increase. Talk about crooked whisky—by which men mean the whisky that does not pay the tax to government—I tell you all strong drink is crooked. Crooked otard, crooked cognac, crooked schnapps, crooked beer, crooked wine, crooked whisky, because it makes a man's path crooked, and his life crooked, and his death crooked, and his eternity crooked.

If I could gather all the armies of the dead drunkards and have them come to resurrection, and then add to that host all the armies of living drunkards, five and ten abreast, and then if I could have you mount a horse and ride along that line for review, you would ride that horse until he dropped from exhaustion, and you would mount another horse and ride until he fell from exhaustion, and you would take another and another, and you would ride along hour after hour, and day after day. Great host, in regiments, in brigades. Great armies of them. And then if you had voice enough stentorian to make them all hear, and you could give the command, "Forward, march!" their first tramp would make the earth tremble. I do not care which way you look in the community to-day, the evil is increasing.

I call your attention to the fact that there are thousands of people born with a thirst for strong drink—a fact too often ignored. Along some ancestral lines there runs the river of temptation. There are children whose swaddling clothes are torn off the shroud of death. Many a father has made a will of this sort: "In the name of God, amen. I bequeath to my children my houses and lands and estates, share and share shall they alike. Hereto I affix my hand and seal in the presence of witnesses." And yet, perhaps that very man has made another will that the people have never read, and that has not been proved in the courts. That will, if put in writing, would read something like this: "In the name of disease and appetite and death, amen. I bequeath to my children my evil habits, my tankards shall be theirs, my wine-cup shall be theirs, my destroyed reputation shall be theirs. Share and share alike shall they in the infamy. Hereto I affix my hand and seal in the presence of all the applauding harpies of hell."

From the multitude of those who have the evil habit born within them, this army is being augmented. And I am sorry to say that a great many of the drug-stores are abetting this evil, and alcohol is sold under the name of bitters. It is bitters for this, and bitters for that, and bitters for some other thing; and good men deceived, not knowing there is any thraldom of alcoholism coming from that source, are going down, and some day a man sits with the bottle of black bitters on his table, and the cork flies out, and after it flies a fiend, and clutches the man by his throat, and says: "Aha! I have been after you for ten years. I have got you now. Down with you, down with you!" Bitters? Ah! yes. They make a man's family bitter, and his home bitter, and his disposition bitter, and his death bitter, and his hell bitter. Bitters: A vast army all the time increasing. And let me also say that it is as thoroughly organized as any army, with commander-in-chief, staff-officers, infantry, cavalry, batteries, sutler-ships, and flaming ensigns, and that every candidate for office in America will yet have to pronounce himself the friend or foe of the liquor traffic.

I have in my possession the circular of a brewers' association—a circular sent to all candidates for office—a form to be filled up, saying whether the candidate is a friend of the liquor traffic, or its enemy; and if he is an enemy of the business then the man is doomed; or if he declines to fill up the circular and send it back, his silence is taken as a negative answer.

It seems to me it is about time for the seventeen million professors of religion in America to take sides. It is going to be an out-and-out battle between drunkenness and sobriety, between heaven and hell, between God and the devil. Take sides before there is any further national decadence; take sides before your sons are sacrificed, and the new home of your daughter goes down under the alcoholism of an embruted husband. Take sides while your voice, your pen, your prayer, your vote, may have some influence in arresting the despoliation of this nation. If the seventeen million professors of religion should take sides on the subject, it would not be very long before the destiny of this nation would be decided in the right direction.

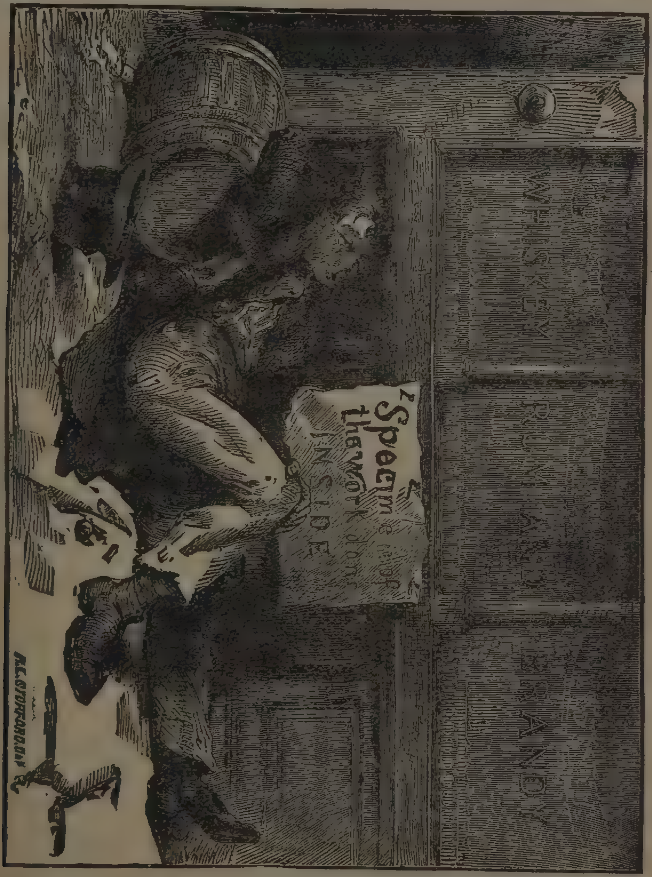
Is it a State evil? or is it a national evil? Does it belong to the North? or does it belong to the South? Does it belong to the East? or does it belong to the West? Ah! there is not an American river into which its tears have not fallen, and into which its suicides have not plunged. What ruined that Southern plantation? every field a fortune, the proprietor and his family once the most affluent supporters of summer watering-places. What threw that New England farm into decay and turned the roseate cheeks that bloomed at the foot of the Green Mountains into the pallor of despair? What has smitten every street of every village, town, and city of this continent with a moral pestilence? Intemperance

To prove that this is a national evil, I call up three States in opposite directions—Maine, Iowa, and Georgia. Let them testify in regard to this. State of Maine says: "It is so great an evil up here we have anathematized it as a State." State of Iowa says: "It is so great an evil out here we have prohibited it by constitutional amendment." State of Georgia says: "It is so great an evil down here that ninety counties of this State have made the sale of intoxicating drink a criminality." So the word comes up from all sources, and it is going to be a Waterloo, and I want you to know on what side I am going to be when that Waterloo is fully come, and I want you to be on the right side. Either drunkenness will be destroyed in this country, or the American Government will be destroyed. Drunkenness and free institutions are coming into a death grapple.

Oh, how many are waiting to see if something can not be done! Thousands of drunkards waiting who cannot go ten minutes in any direction without having the temptation glaring before their eyes or appealing to their nostrils, they fighting against it with enfeebled will and diseased appetite, conquering, then surrendering, conquering again and surrendering again, and crying: "How long, O Lord, how long before these infamous solicitations shall be gone?"

And how many mothers there are waiting to see if this national curse cannot lift! Oh, is that the boy that had the honest breath who comes home with breath vitiated or disguised? What a change! How quickly those habits of early coming home have been exchanged for the rattling of the night-key in the door long after the last watchman has gone by and tried to see that everything was closed up for the night! Oh, what a change for that young man who we had hope would do something in merchandise, or in artisanship, or in a profession, that would do honor to the family name long after mother's wrinkled hands are folded from the last toil! All that exchanged for startled look when the door-bell rings, lest something has happened. And the wish that the scarlet fever twenty years ago had been fatal, for then he would have gone directly to the bosom of his Saviour. But alas! poor old soul, she has lived to experience what Solomon said: "A foolish son is a heaviness to his mother."

Oh, what a funeral it will be when that boy is brought home dead! And how mother will sit there and say: "Is this my boy that I used to fondle, and that I walked the floor with in the night when he was sick? Is this the boy that I held to the baptismal font for baptism? Is this the boy for whom I toiled until the blood burst from the tips of my fingers that he might have a good start and a good home? Lord, why hast Thou let me live to see this? Can it be that these swollen hands are the ones that used to wander over my face when rocking him to sleep? Can it be that this is the swollen brow that I once so rapturously kissed? Poor boy! how tired he does look. I wonder who struck him that blow across the temples! I wonder if he uttered a dying prayer! Wake up, my son; don't you hear me? wake up! Oh, he can't hear me! Dead, dead, dead! 'Oh, Absalom, my son, my son, would God that I had died for thee, oh, Absalom, my son, my son!'"


WHISKEY
RUM
BRANDY
Specimen of the work done INSIDE

THE GIN-SHOP'S VICTIM.

I am not much of a mathematician, and I cannot estimate it; but is there any one quick enough at figures to estimate how many mothers there are waiting for something to be done? Aye, there are many wives waiting for domestic rescue. He promised something different from that when, after the long acquaintance and the careful scrutiny of character, the hand and the heart were offered and accepted. What a hell on earth a woman lives in who has a drunken husband!

O Death, how lovely thou art to her, and how soft and warm thy skeleton hand! The sepulcher at midnight in winter is a king's drawing-room compared with that woman's home. It is not so much the blow on the head that hurts, as the blow on the heart. The rum fiend came to the door of that beautiful home and opened the door and stood there, and said: "I curse this dwelling with an unrelenting curse. I curse that father into a maniac, I curse that mother into a pauper. I curse those sons into vagabonds. I curse those daughters into profligacy. Cursed be bread-tray and cradle. Cursed be couch and chair and family Bible with record of marriages and births and deaths. Curse upon curse." Oh, how many wives are there waiting to see if something cannot be done to shake these frosts of the second death off the orange blossoms! Yea, God is waiting, the God who works through human instrumentalities, waiting to see whether this nation is going to overthrow this evil; and if it refuse to do so God will wipe out the nation as He did Phœnicia, as He did Rome, as He did Thebes, as He did Babylon. Aye, He is waiting to see what the church of God will do. If the church does not do its work, then He will wipe it out as He did the church of Ephesus, church of Thyatira, church of Sardis. The Protestant and Roman Catholic churches to-day stand side by side with an impotent look, gazing on this evil, which costs this country more than a billion dollars a year to take care of the 800,000 paupers, and the 315,000 criminals, and the 30,000 idiots, and to bury the 75,000 drunkards.

Protagoras boasted that out of the sixty years of his life forty years he had spent in ruining youth; but intemperance may make the more infamous boast that all its life it has been ruining the bodies, minds, and souls of the human race.

Put on your spectacles and take a candle and examine the platforms of the two leading political parties of this country, and see what they are doing for the arrest of this evil, and for the overthrow of this abomination. Resolutions—oh yes, resolutions about Mormonism! It is safe to attack that organized nastiness 2,000 miles away. But not one resolution against drunkenness, which would turn this entire nation into one bestial Salt Lake City. Resolutions against political corruption, but not one word about drunkenness, which would rot this nation from scalp to heel. Resolutions about protection, against competition with foreign industries, but not one word about protection of family and church and nation against the scalding, blasting, all-consuming, damning tariff of strong drink put upon every financial, individual, spiritual, moral, national interest. The Democratic party—in power for the most of the time for forty years—what did that national party do for the extirpation of this evil? Nothing, absolutely nothing, appallingly nothing. The Republican party—in power for about a quarter of a century—what has it done as a national party to extirpate this evil? Nothing, absolutely nothing, appallingly nothing. I look in another direction.

The Church of God is the grandest and most glorious institution on earth. What has it in solid phalanx accomplished for the overthrow of drunkenness? Have its forces ever been marshaled? No, not in this direction. The church holds the balance of power in America; and if Christian people—the men and the women who profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and to love purity, and to be the sworn enemies of all uncleanness and debauchery and sin—if all such would march side by side and shoulder to shoulder, this evil would soon be overthrown. Think of 300,000 churches and Sunday-shools in Christendom, marching shoulder to shoulder! How very short a time it would take them to put down this evil, if all the churches of God—trans-Atlantic and cis-Atlantic—were armed on this subject!

Young men of America, pass over into the army of teetotalism. Whisky, good to preserve corpses, ought never to turn you into a corpse. Tens of thousands of young men have been dragged out of respectability, and out of purity, and out of good character, and into darkness, by this infernal stuff called strong drink. Do not touch it! Do not touch it!

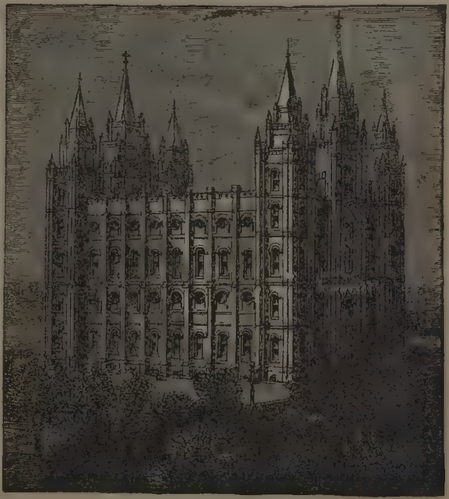
CHAPTER VII.

MORMONISM.

There have been in the world hundreds of political parties. They did their work. They lost their prestige. They expired. Their names are forgotten. Enough for me to declare what I believe God and civilization demand of the two political parties of this day, or their extermination. God and civilization demand of the political parties of this day a plank anti-Mormonistic. It is high time that the nation stopped playing with this cancer. All the plasters of political quacks only aggravate it, and nothing but the surgery of the sword will cure it. All the congressional laws on this subject have been notorious failures. Meanwhile the great monster sits between the two mountains—the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevadas—sits in defiance and mockery, sometimes holding its sides with uncontrollable mirth at our national impotency. Shipload after shipload of Mormons are regurgitated at your Castle Garden, and hundreds and thousands of them are being sent on to the great moral lazaretto of the West. Others are on the way, and the Atlantic is heaving toward us the great surges of foreign libertinism. This moment the emissaries of that organized lust are busy in Norway and Sweden and England and Ireland and Scotland and Germany, breaking up homes, and with infernal cords drawing the population this way, a population which will be dumped as carrion on the American territories. American crime, with its long rake stretched across other continents, is heaping up on this land great winnows of abomination. Worse and worse. Four hundred Mormons coming into our port in one day, six hundred in another day, eight hundred in another day.

Are we so cowardly and selfish in this generation that we are going to bequeath to the following generations this great evil? Letting it go on until our children come to the front and we are safely entrenched under the mound of our own sepulchers, leaving our children through all their active life to wonder why we postponed this evil for their extirpation when we might have destroyed it with a hundred-fold less exposure. What a legacy for this generation to leave the following generation! A vast acreage of sweltering putrefaction, of lowest beastliness, of suffocating stench, all the time becoming more and more mal-odorous and rotten and damnable. We want some great political party in some strong and unmistakable plank to declare that it will extirpate heroically and immediately this great harem of the American continent. We want some President of the United States to come in on such an anti-Mormornistic platform, and in his opening message to Congress ask for an appropriation for military expedition, and then put Phil Sheridan in his lightning stirrups, heading his horse westward, and in one year Mormonism will be extirpated and national decency vindicated. Compelling Mormonistic chiefs to take oath of allegiance will not do it, for they have declared in open assembly that perjury in their cause is commendable. Religious tracts on purity amount to nothing. They will not read them. Anything shorter than bayonets and anything softer than bullets will never do that work.

Every day you open a paper and you see in the State of New York some bigamist arrested and punished. What you prohibit on a small scale for a State you allow on a large scale for a nation. Bigamy must be put down. Polygamy must go free. What has been the effect, my friends? It has demoralized this whole nation. That carbuncle on the back of the nation has sickened all the nerves, and muscles, and arteries and veins, and limbs of the body politic. I account in that way for many of the loose ideas abroad on all sides on the subject of the marriage relation. Divorce by the wholesale. Concubinage in high circles. Libertinism, if gloved and patent leathered, admitted into high circles. The malaria of Salt Lake City has smitten the nation with moral typhoid. The bad influence has well-nigh spiked that gun of Sinai which needs to thunder over the New England hills, over the savannas of the South and over the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevadas clear to the Pacific coast, "Thou shalt not commit adultery!" Advertisements in newspapers saying, "Divorce legally and quietly effected. Can pay in installments!" Some of the New York lawyers giving their entire time to domestic separations—suborning witnesses, giving advice as to how many months it is necessary to be out of the city, inducing suspicious complications, sending detective sleuth hounds on the track of good citizens, until the honest lawyers of these cities were compelled a little while ago to make outcry against the bemeaning of their honorable profession. Looser and looser ideas on the subject of marriage, until sometimes the question of divorce is taken into consideration in the wedding solemnities, and people promise

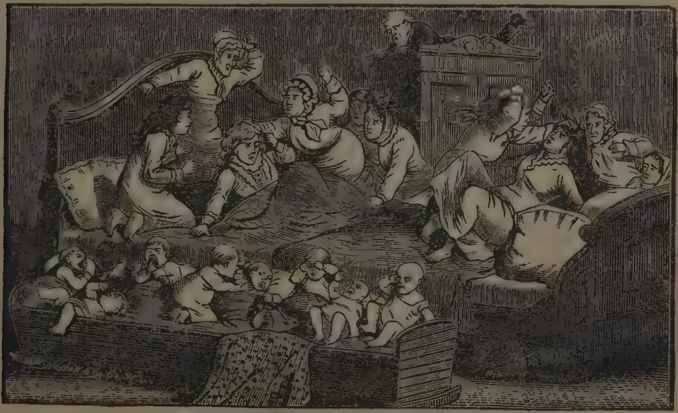

THE MORMON TEMPLE.

fidelity till death do them part, and say afterward softly, "perhaps," or "may be," "I rather think so." All over this land more and more marriage in fun.

We do not want divorce made more easy in this country; we want it made more hard, so that people will be more cautious in their affiancing, and you will understand that if you marry a brute of a husband or a fool of a wife, you will have to stand it. Ah! my friends, there will be no toning up on this subject, there will be no moral health in the United States on the subject of the marriage relation until this nation shall slough off this Mormornistic ulcer, and burn out with caustic of gunpowder this wound which has been so long feculent and ichorous and dreathful. If you are under the delusion that by mild laws passed against Mormonism the evil will be extirpated, you are making an awful mistake. The sooner you get over it the better. God and civilization demand of both political parties now a plank anti-Mormonistic.

Again, there is demanded of the political parties in this day, a plank of intelligent helpfullness for the great foreign population which have come among us. It is too late now to discuss whether we had better let them come. They are here. They are coming this moment through Narrows, they are coming this moment through the gates of Castle Garden, they are this moment taking the first full inhalation of the free air of America, and they will continue to come as long as this country is the best place to live in. You might as well pass a law prohibiting summer bees from alighting on a field of blossoming buckwheat, you might as well prohibit the stags of the mountains from coming down to the deer lick, as to prohibit the hunger-bitten nations of Europe from coming to this land of bread, as to prohibit the people of England, Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, and Germany, working themselves to death on small wages on the other side the sea, from coming to this land, where there are the largest compensations under the sun. Why did God spread out the prairies of Dakota, and roll the precious ore into Colorado? It was that all the earth might come and plow, and come and dig. Just as long as the centrifugal force of foreign despotisms throw them off, just so long will the centripetal force of American institutions draw them here.

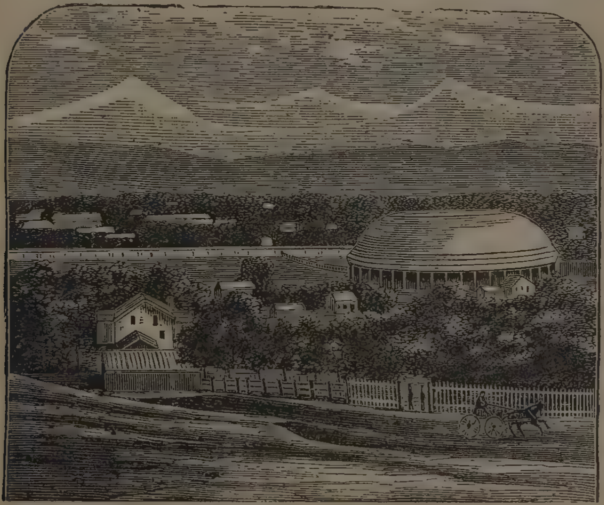
And that is what is going to make this the mightiest nation of the earth. Intermarriage of nationalities. Not circle intermarrying circle, and nation intermarrying nation, but is going to be Italian and Norwegian, Russian and Celt, Scotch and French, English and American. The American of a hundred years from now is to be different from the American of to-day. German brain, Irish wit, French civility, Scotch firmness, English loyalty, Italian æsthetics packed into one man, and he an American. It is this intermarriage of nationalities that is going to make the American race the mightiest race of the ages. Now, I say, in God's name let them come.



TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION.

But what are we doing for the moral and intellectual culture of the half million of foreigners who came in one year, and the six hundred thousand who came in another year, and the eight hundred thousand who came in another year, and the million who came into our various American ports. What are we doing for them? Well, we are doing a great deal for them. We steal their baggage as soon as they get ashore! We send them up to a boarding-house where the least they lose is their money. We swindle them within ten minutes after they get ashore. We are doing a great deal for them! But what are we doing to introduce them into the duties of good citizenship? Many of them never saw a ballot-box, many of them never heard of the Constitution of the United States, many of them have no acquaintance with our laws. Now, I say, let the Government of the United States, so commanded by some political party, give to every immigrant who lands here a volume in good type and well bound for long usage—a volume containing the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and a chapter on the spirit of our Government. Let there be such a book on every shelf of every free library in America. While the American Bible Society puts into the right hand of every immigrant a copy of the Holy Scriptures, let the Government of the United States, so commanded by some political party, put into the left hand of every immigrant a volume instructing him in the duties of good citizenship. There are thousands of foreigners in this land who need to learn that the ballot-box is not a footstool but a throne; not something to put your foot on, but something to bow before.

Again, it is demanded of the political parties of this day that they have a plank that shall acknowledge God. Let there be no favoring of sects. Let Trinitarian and Unitarian, Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Roman Catholic, be alike in the sight of the law—every man free to worship in his own way— but let no political party think it can do its duty, unless it acknowledges that God, who built this continent, and revealed it at the right time to the discoverer, and who has reared a prosperity which has been given to no other people. "Oh," says some one, "there are people in this country who do not believe in a God, and it would be an insult to them." Well, there are people in this country who do not believe in common decency, or common honesty, or any kind of government, preferring anarchy. Your every platform is an insult to them. You ought not to regard a man who does not believe in God any more than you should regard a man who refuses to believe in common decency. Your pocketbook is not safe a moment in the presence of an atheist! God is the only source of good government. Why not, then, say so, and let the chairman of the committee on resolutions in your national convention take a pen full of ink, and with bold hand head the document with one significant, "Whereas," acknowledging the goodness of God in the past, and begging His kindness and protection for the future.



SALT LAKE CITY.

For the lack of recognition of God in your political platforms they amount to nothing. They both make loud declaration about civil service reform, and it has been a failure. If you can take now in your cool moments the declaration made by the Democratic party in Cincinnati in 1880, and the declaration made by the Republican party in Chicago in 1880, and read those two declarations on the subject of civil service reform, and then think of what has transpired, and control your mirth, you have more self-control than I have. My child asks me what is civil service reform, and I tell him, as near as I can understand, it is that when the Republican party get the government of a State they are to turn out the Democrats, and when the Democrats get the supremacy in the State they are to turn out the Republicans.

Your platforms cry out for reform, and promise reform, if they are only kept in power, or may obtain power. How much do they mean by reform? See what the Republican party did in 1876 in Louisiana and what the Democratic party did three or four years after in the gubernatorial election in Maine! Credit Mobilier of eleven years ago, River and Harbor Bill, by which the tax-payers of the United States were swindled out of fifty millions of dollars—in both infamies the two parties shoulder to shoulder, and side to side. What you want is more of God in your pronunciamentoes. Without Him reform is retrogression, and gain is loss, and victory is defeat.

This country belongs to God, and we ought in every possible way to acknowledge it. From the moment that, on an October morning, in 1492, Columbus looked over the side of the ship, and saw the carved staff which made him think he was near an inhabited country, and saw also a thorn and a cluster of berries—type of our history ever since, the piercing sorrows and the cluster of national joys—until this hour, our country has been bounded on the north and south and east and west by the goodness of God. The Huguenots took possession of the Carolinas in the name of God; William Penn settled Philadelphia in the name of God; the Hollanders took possession of New York in the name of God; the Pilgrim Fathers settled New England in the name of God. Preceding the first gun of Bunker Hill, at the voice of prayer all heads uncovered. In the war of 1812 an officer came to General Andrew Jackson and said: "There is an unusual noise in the camp; it ought to be stopped." General Jackson said: "What is the noise?" The officer said: "It is the voices of prayer and praise." And the General said: "God forbid that prayer and praise should be an unusual noise in the encampment; you had better go and join them." Prayer at Valley Forge, prayer at Monmouth, prayer at Atlanta, prayer at South Mountain, prayer at Gettysburg.

"Oh," says some infidel, "the Northern people prayed on one side, and the Southern people prayed on the other side, and so it didn't amount to anything." And I have heard good Christian people confounded with the infidel statement, when it is as plain to me as my right hand. Yes, the Northern people prayed in one way, and the Southern people prayed in another way, and God answered in His own way, giving to the North the re-establishment of the Government, and giving to the South larger opportunities, larger than she had ever anticipated, the harnessing of her rivers in great manufacturing interests, until the Mobile, and the Tallapoosa, and the Chattahoochee, are Southern Merrimacs, and the unrolling of great mines of coal and iron, of which the world knew nothing, and opening before her opportunities of wealth which will give ninety-nine per cent. more of affluence than she ever possessed. And, instead of the black hands of American slaves emancipated, there are the more industrious and black hands of the coal and iron industries of the South which will achieve for her fabulous and unimagined wealth.

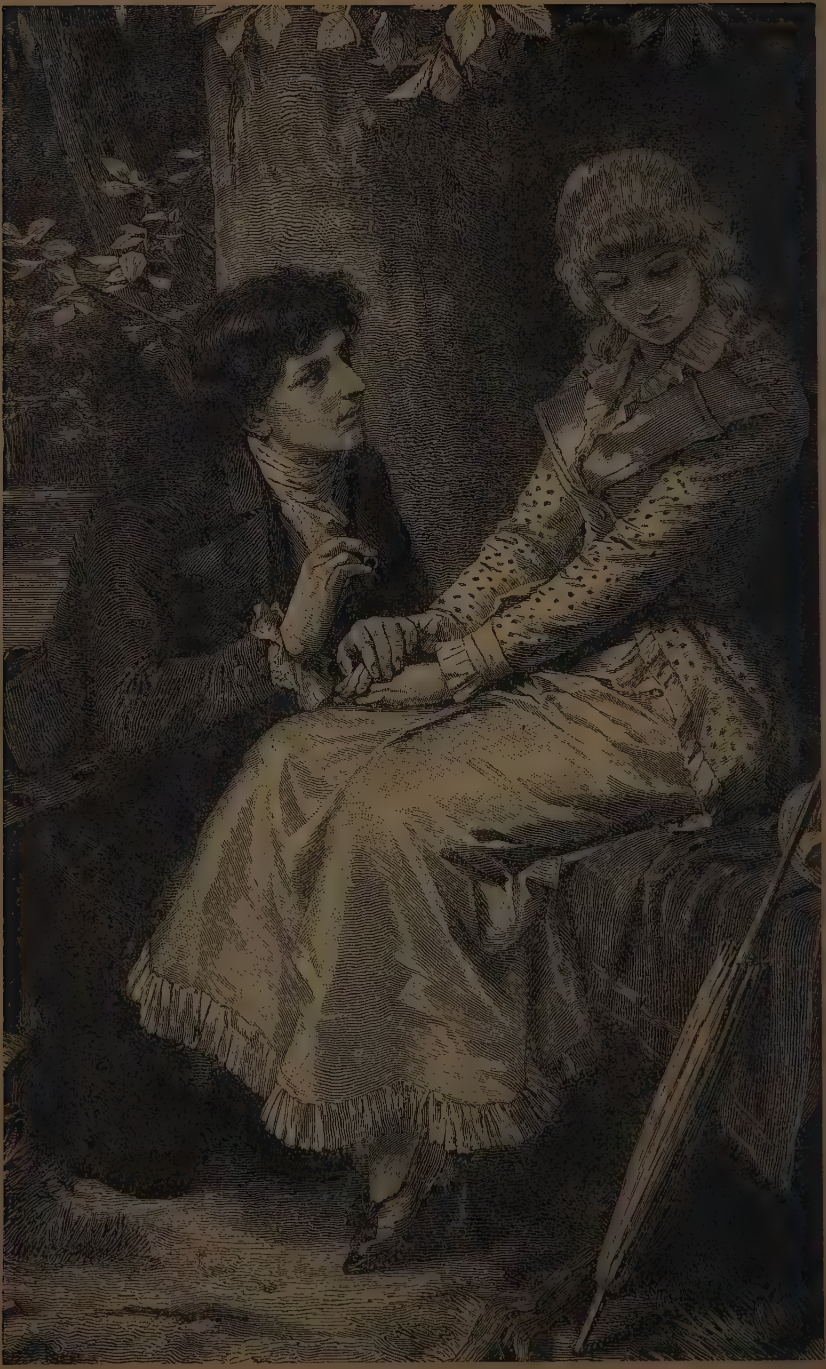
'And there are domes of white blossoms where spread the white
tent,

> And there are ploughs in the track where the war wagons went,
> And there are song swhere they lifted up Rachel's lament."

Oh, you are a stupid man if you do not understand how God answered Abraham Lincoln's prayer in the White House, and Stonewall Jackson's prayer in the saddle, and answered all the prayers of all the cathedrals on both sides of Mason and Dixon's Line. God's country all the way past. God's country now.

Put His name in your pronunciamentoes, put His name on your ensigns, put His name on your city and State and national enterprises, put His name in your hearts. To most of us this country was the cradle, and to most of us it will be the grave. We want the same glorious privileges which we enjoy to go down to our children. We can not sleep well the last sleep, nor will the pillow of dust be easy to our heads until we are assured that the God of our American institutions in the past, will be the God of our American institutions in the days that are to come. Oh, when all the rivers which empty into the Atlantic and Pacific seas shall pull on factory bands, when all the great mines of gold, and silver, and iron, and coal shall be laid bare for the nation, when the last swamp shall be reclaimed, and the last jungle cleared, and the last American desert Edenized, and from sea to sea the continent shall be occupied by more than twelve hundred million souls, may it be found that moral and religious influences were multiplied in more rapid ratio than the population. And then there shall be four doxologies coming from north, and south, and east, and west—four doxologies rolling toward each other and meeting mid-continent with such dash of holy joy that they shall mount to the throne.

> "And Heaven's high arch resound again
> With 'peace on earth, good will to men.'"



THE ENGAGEMENT

CHAPTER VIII.

DIVORCE.

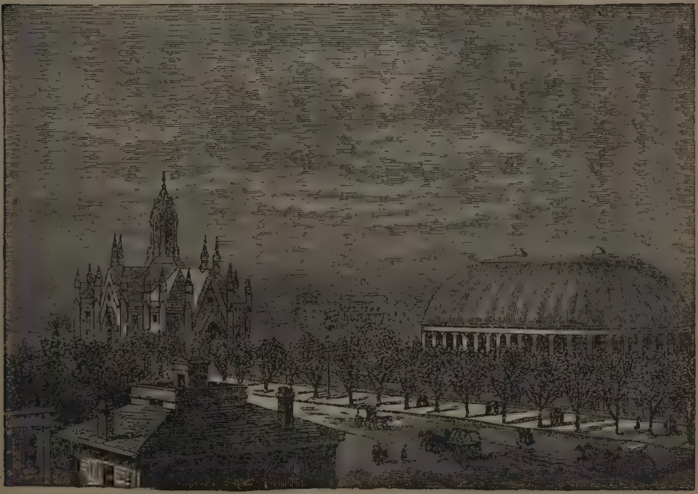
That there are hundreds and thousands of infelicitous homes in America, no one will doubt. If there were only one skeleton in the closet, that might be locked up and abandoned; but in many a home there is a skeleton in the hallway and a skeleton in all the apartments. "Unhappily married" are two words descriptive of many a homestead. It needs no orthodox minister to prove to a badly mated pair that there is a hell; they are there now.

Some say that for the alleviation of all these domestic disorders of which we hear, easy divorce is a good prescription. God sometimes authorizes divorce as certainly as He authorizes marriage. I have just as much regard for one lawfully divorced as I have for one lawfully married. But you know, and I know, that wholesale divorce is one of our national scourges. I am not surprised at this when I think of the influences which have been abroad militating against the marriage relation. For many years the platforms of the country rang with talk about a free love millennium. There were meetings of this kind held in the Academy of Music, Brooklyn; Cooper Institute, New York; Tremont Temple, Boston, and all over the land. Some of the women who were most prominent in that movement have since been distinguished for great promiscuosity of affection. Popular themes for such occasions were the tyranny of man, the oppression of the marriage relation, women's rights, and the affinities. Prominent speakers were women with short curls, short dress, and very long tongues, everlastingly at war with God because they were created women; while on the platform sat meek men with soft accent, and cowed demeanor, apologetic for masculinity, and holding the parasols while the termagant orators went on preaching the gospel of free love.

That campaign of about twenty years set more devils into the marriage relation than will be exorcised in the next fifty. Men and women went home from such meetings so permanently confused as to who were their wives and husbands, that they never got out of their perplexity, and the criminal and the civil courts tried to disentangle the Iliad of woes, and this one got alimony, and that one got a limited divorce, and this mother kept the children on condition that the father could sometimes come and look at them, and these went into the poor-houses, and those went into an insane asylum, and those went into dissolute public life, and all went to destruction. The mightiest war ever made against the marriage institution was that free love campaign, sometimes under one name, and sometimes under another.

Another influence that has warred upon the marriage relation has been polygamy in Utah. That is a stereotyped caricature of the marriage relation, and has poisoned the whole land. You might as well think that you can have an arm in a state of mortification and yet the whole body not be sickened, as to have those Territories polygamized and yet the body of the nation not feel the putrefaction. Hear it, good men and women of America, that so long ago as 1862, a law was passed by Congress forbidding polyamy in the Territories and in all the places where they had jurisdiction. Armed with all the power of government, and having an army at their disposal, and yet the first brick has not been knocked from that fortress of libertinism.

Every new President in his inaugural has tickled that monster with the straw of condemnation, and every Congress has stultified itself in proposing some plan that would not work. Polygamy stands in Utah and in other of the Territories to-day more entrenched, and more brazen, and more puissant, and more braggart, and more infernal, than at any time in its history. James Buchanan, a much-abused man of his day, did more for the extirpation of this villainy than all the subsequent administrations have dared to do. Mr Buchanan sent out an army, and although it was halted in ts work, still he accomplished more than the subsequent. administrations, which have done nothing but talk, talk, talk.



ASSEMBLY HALL AND TABARNACLE, SALT LAKE.

Polygamy in Utah has warred against the marriage relation throughout the land. It is impossible to have such an awful sewer of iniquity sending up its miasma, which is wafted by the winds north, south, east and west, without the whole land being affected by it.

Another influence that has warred against the marriage relation in this country has been a pustulous literature, with its millions of sheets every week choked with stories of domestic wrongs, and infidelities, and massacres and outrages, until it is a wonder to me that there are any decencies or any common sense left on the subject of marriage. One-half of the news-stands of all our cities reeking with the filth. "Now," say some, "we admit all these evils, and the only way to clear them out or correct them is by easy divorce." Well, before we yield to that cry, let us find out how easy it is now.

I have looked over the laws of all the States, and I find that while in some States it is easier than in others, in every State it is easy. The State of Illinois through its Legislature recites a long list of proper causes for divorce, and then closes up by giving to the courts the right to make a decree of divorce in any case where they deem it expedient. After that you are not surprised at the announcement that in one county in the State of Illinois, in one year, there were eight hundred and thirty-three divorces. If you want to know how easy it is you have only to look over the records of the States. In Massachusetts six hundred divorces in one year; in Maine four hundred and seventy-eight in one year; in Connecticut four hundred and one divorces in one year; in the city of San Francisco three hundred and thirty-three divorces in 1880; in New England in one year two thousand one hundred and thirteen divorces, and in twenty years in New England thirty thousand. Is that not easy enough?

I want you to notice that frequency of divorce always goes along with the dissoluteness of society. Rome for five hundred years had not one case of divorce. Those were her days of glory and virtue. Then the reign of vice began, and divorce became epidemic. If you want to know how rapidly the Empire went down, ask Gibbon. Do you know how the Reign of Terror was introduced in France? By twenty thousand cases of divorce in one year in Paris. What we want in this country, and in all lands, is that divorce be made more, and more, and more difficult. Then people before they enter that relation will be persuaded that there will probably be no escape from it, except through the door of the sepulcher. Then they will pause on the verge of that relation, until they are fully satisfied that it is best, and that it is right, and that it is happiest. Then we shall have no more marriage in fun. Then men and women will not enter the relation with the idea it is only a trial trip, and if they do not like it they can get out at the first landing. Then this whole question will be taken out of the frivolous into the tremendous, and there will be no more joking about the blossoms in a bride's hair than about the cypress on a coffin.

What we want is that the Congress of the United States move for the changing the national Constitution so that a law can be passed which shall be uniform all over the country, and what shall be right in one State shall be right in all the States, and what is wrong in one State will be wrong in all the States.

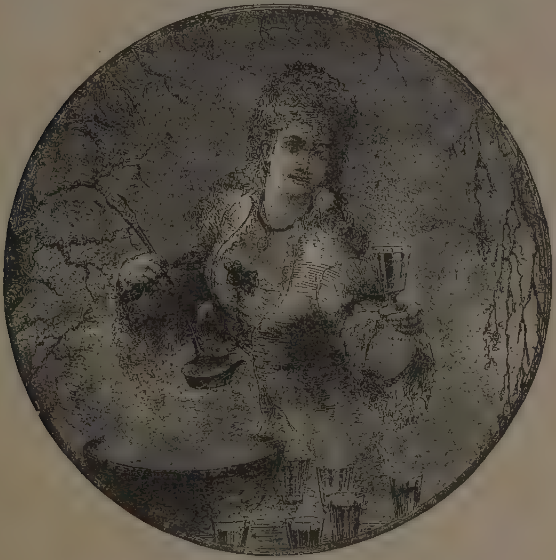
How is it now? If a party in the marriage relation gets dissatisfied, it is only necessary to move to another State to achieve liberation from the domestic tie, and divorce is effected so easy that the first one party knows of it is by seeing it in a newspaper that Rev. Dr. Somebody on a certain day, introduced into a new marriage relation, a member of the household who went off on a pleasure excursion to Newport, or a business excursion to Chicago. Married at the bride's house. No cards. There are States of the Union which practically put a premium upon the disintegration of the marriage relation, while there are other States, like New York State, that has the pre-eminent idiocy of making marriage lawful at twelve and fourteen years of age.

The Congress of the United States needs to move for a change of the national Constitution, and then to appoint a committee—not made up of single gentlemen, but of men of families, and their families in Washington—who shall prepare a good, honest, righteous, comprehensive, uniform law that will control everything from Sandy Hook to Golden Horn. That will put an end to brokerages in marriage. That will send divorce lawyers into a decent business. That will set people agitated for many years on the question of how shall they get away from each other, to planning how they can adjust themselves to the more or less unfavorable circumstances.

More difficult divorce will put an estoppal to a great extent upon marriage as a financial speculation. There are men who go into the relation just as they go into Wall Street to purchase shares. The female to be invited into the partnership of wedlock is utterly unattractive, and in disposition a suppressed Vesuvius. Everybody knows it, but this masculine candidate for matrimonial orders, through the commercial agency or through the country records, find out how much estate is to be inherited, and he calculates it. He thinks out how long it will be before the old man will die, and whether he can stand the refractory temper until he does die, and then he enters the relation; for he says, "If I cannot stand it, then through the divorce law I'll back out." That process is going on all the time, and men enter the relation without any moral principle, without any affection, and it is as much a matter of stock speculation as anything that transpires in Union Pacific, Wabash and Delaware and Lackawanna.

Now, suppose a man understood, as he ought to understand, that if he goes into that relation there is no possibility of his getting out, or no probability, he would be more slow to put his neck in the yoke. He should say to himself, "Rather than a Caribbean whirlwind with a whole fleet of shipping in its arms, give me a zephyr off fields of sunshine and gardens of peace."

Rigorous divorce law will also hinder woman from the fatal mistake of marrying men to reform them. If a young man by twenty-five years of age, or thirty years of age have the habit of strong drink fixed on him, he is as certainly bound for a drunkard's grave as that train starting out from Grand Central Depot at 8 o'clock to-morrow morning is bound for Albany. It may not reach Albany, for it may be thrown from the track. The young man may not reach a drunkard's grave, for something may throw him off the iron tracks of evil habit; but the probability is that the train will reach Albany and the probability is that the young man who has the habit of strong drink fixed on him before thirty years of age will arrive at a drunkard's grave. She knows he drinks. Everybody knows he drinks. Parents warn, neighbors and friends warn. She will marry him, she will reform him.



THE TEMPTER.

If she is unsuccessful in the experiment, why then the divorce law will emancipate her, because habitual drunkenness is a cause for divorce in Indiana, Kentucky, Florida, Connecticut, and nearly all the States. So the poor thing goes to the altar of sacrifice. If you will show me the poverty-struck streets in any city, I will show you the homes of the women who married men to reform them. In one case out of ten thousand it may be a successful experiment. I never saw the successful experiment. But have a rigorous divorce law, and that woman will say, "If I am affianced to that man, it is for life; and if now in the ardor of his young love, and I am the prize to be won, he will not give up his cups, when he has won the prize, surely he will not give up his cups." And so that woman will say to the man, "No, sir, you are already married to the club, and you are married to that evil habit, and so you are married twice, and you are a bigamist. Go!"

A rigorous divorce law will also do much to hinder hasty and inconsiderate marriages. Under the impression that one can be easily released, people enter the relation without inquiry, and without reflection. Romance and impulse rule the day. Perhaps the only ground for the marriage compact is that she likes his looks, and he admires the graceful way she passes around the ice-cream at the picnic! It is all they know about each other. It is all the preparation for life. A man, not able to pay his own board bill, with not a dollar in his possession, will stand at the altar and take the loving hand, and say, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow!" A woman that could not make a loaf of bread to save her life, will swear to cherish and obey. A Christian will marry an atheist, and that always makes conjoined wretchedness; for if a man does not believe there is a God he is neither to be trusted with a dollar, nor with your life-long happiness.

Having read much about love in a cottage people brought up in ease will go and starve in a hovel. Runaway matches and elopements, ninety-nine out of thousand of which mean death and hell, multiplying on all hands. You see them in every day's newspapers. Our ministers in this region have no defence such as they have in other cities where the banns must be previously published and an officer of the law must give a certificate that all is right; so clergymen are left defenceless, and unite those who ought never to be united. Perhaps they are too young or perhaps they are standing already in some domestic compact.

By the wreck of ten thousand homes, by the holocaust of ten thousand sacrificed men and women, by the hearth-stone of the family which is the cornerstone of the State, and in the name of that God who hath set up the family institution and who hath made the breaking of the marital oath the most appalling of all perjuries, I implore the Congress of the United States to make some righteous, uniform law for all the States, and from ocean to ocean, on this subject of marriage and divorce.

And, fellow-citizens, as well as fellow-Christians, let us have a divine rage against anything that wars on the marriage state. Blessed institution! Instead of two arms to fight the battle of life, four. Instead of two eyes to scrutinize the path of life, four. Instead of two shoulders to lift the burden of life, four. Twice the energy, twice the courage, twice the holy ambitition, twice the probability of worldly success, twice the prospects of heaven. Into that matrimonial bower God fetches two souls. Outside the bower room for all contentions, and all bickerings, and all controversies, but inside that bower there is room for only one guest—the angel of love. Let that angel stand at the floral doorway of this Edenic bower with drawn sword to hew down the worst foe of that bower—easy divorce. And for every Paradise lost may there be a Paradise regained. And after we quit our home here may we have a brighter home in heaven, at the windows of which this moment are familiar faces watching for our arrival, and wondering why so long we tarry.

CHAPTER IX.

PROFANITY, DRUNKENNESS AND THE SOCIAL EVIL.

A procession was formed to carry the Ark or sacred box which, though only three feet nine inches in length and four feet three inches in height and depth, was the symbol of God's presence. As the leaders of the procession lifted this ornamented and brilliant box by two golden poles run through four golden rings, and started for Mount Zion, all the people chanted the battle hymn: "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered." The Cameronians, of Scotland, outraged by James I., who forced upon them religious forms that were offensive, and by the terrible persecution of Drummond, Dalziel and Turner, and by the oppressive laws of Charles I. and Charles II., were driven to proclaim war against tyrants, and went forth to fight for religious liberty; and the mountain heather became red with carnage, and at Bothwell Bridge and Aird's Moss and Drumclog the battle hymn and the battle shout of those glorious old Scotchmen was: "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered." What a whirlwind of power was Oliver Cromwell, and how with his soldier's name, "the Ironsides," he went from victory to victory! Opposing armies melted as he looked at them. He dismissed parliament as easily as a schoolmaster a school. He pointed his finger at Berkeley Castle, and it was taken. He ordered Lord Hopton, the General, to dismount, and he dismounted. See Cromwell marching on with his army, and hear the battle cry of "the Ironsides," loud as a storm and solemn as a death-knell, standards reeling before it, and cavalry horses going back on their haunches, and armies flying at Marston Moor, at Wincepy Field, at Naseby, at Bridewater and Dartmouth. "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered."

You see this is not like a complimentary and tasseled sword that you sometimes see hung up in a parlor, a sword that was never in battle and only to be used on general training day, but more like some weapon carefully hung up in your home, telling its story of Chapultepec, Cerro Gordo and Cherubusco, and Thatcher's Run, and Malvern Hill; for it hangs in the Scripture armory, telling of the holy wars of three thousand years in which it has been carried, but as keen and mighty as when David first unsheathed it. It seems to me what in the Church of God, and in all styles of reformatory work, we most need now is a battle cry. We raise our little standard and put on it the name of some man who only a few years ago began to live, and in a few years will cease to live. We go into contests against the armies of iniquity, depending too much on human agencies. We use for a battle cry the name of some brave Christian reformer, but after a while that reformer dies, or gets old, or loses his courage, and then we take another battle cry, and this time perhaps we put the name of some one who plays Arnold and sells out to the enemy. What we want for a battle cry is the name of some leader who will never betray us, and will never surrender, and will never die. All respect have I for brave men and women, but if we are going to get the victory all along the line we must put God first. We must take the hint of the Gideonites, who wiped out the Bedouin Arabs, commonly called Midianites. These Gideonites had a glorious leader in Gideon, but what was the battle cry with which they flung their enemies into the worst defeat into which any army has ever tumbled. It was: The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Put God first, whoever you put second. If the army of the American Revolution is to free America, it must be: The sword of the Lord and of Washington. If the Germans want to win the day at Sedan, it must be: The sword of the

Lord and Von Moltke. Waterloo was won for the English because not only the armed men at the front but the worshipers in the cathedrals at the rear were crying: The sword of the Lord and Wellington. The Methodists have gone in triumph across nation after nation with the cry: The sword of the Lord and of Wesley. The Presbyterians have gone from victory to victory with the cry: The sword of the Lord and John Knox. The Baptists have conquered millions after millions for Christ with the cry: The sword of the Lord and of Judson. The American Episcopalians have won their mighty way with the cry: The sword of the Lord and of Bishop McIlvaine. The victory is to those who put God first. But as we want a battle cry suited to all sects of religionists, and to all lands, I nominate as the battle cry of Christendom in the approaching Armageddon: "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered.

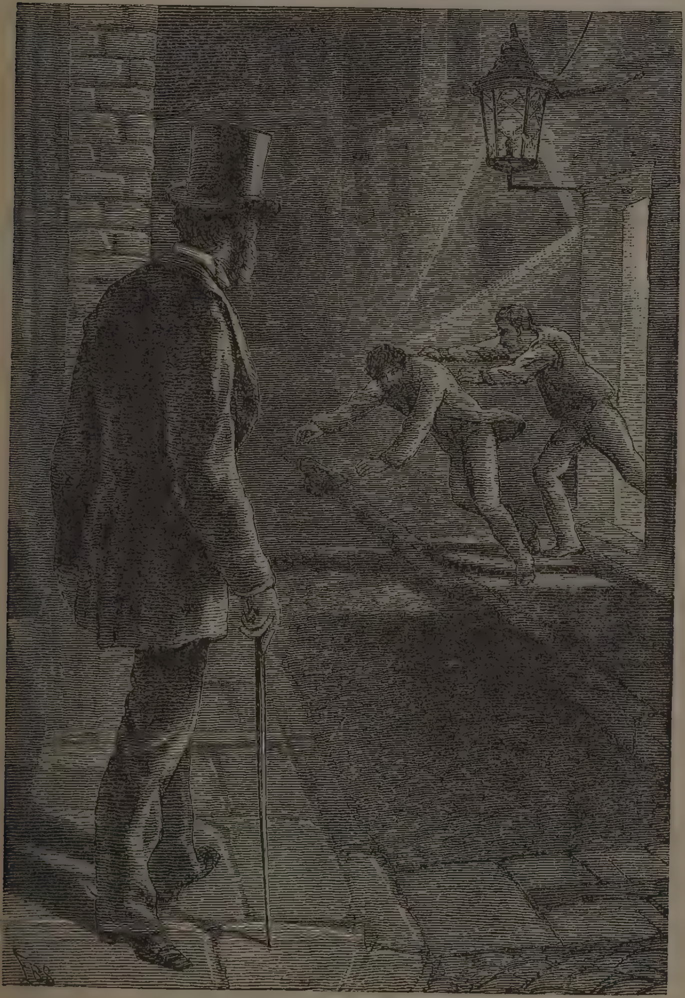
As far as our finite mind can judge, it seems about time for God to rise. Does it not seem that the abominations of this earth have gone far enough? Was there ever a time when sin was so defiant? Were there ever before so many fists lifted toward God, telling him to come on if he dare? Look at the blasphemy abroad! What towering profanity! Would it be possible for any one to calculate the numbers of times that the name of Almighty God, and of Jesus Christ, are every day taken irreverently on the lips? So common has blasphemy become that the public mind and public ear have got used to it, and a blasphemer goes up and down this country in his lectures defying the plain law against blasphemy, and there is not a mayor in America that has backbone enough to interfere with him save one, and that the Mayor of Toronto. Profane swearing is as much forbidden by the law as theft, or arson, or murder; yet who executes it? Profanity is worse than theft, or arson, or murder, for these crimes are attacks on humanity—that is an attack on God. This country is pre-eminent for blasphemy. A man

as today

traveling in Russia was supposed to be a clergyman. "Why do you take me to be a clergyman?" said the man. "Oh," said the Russian, "all other Americans swear." The crime is multiplying in intensity. God very often shows what He thinks of it, but for the most the fatality is hushed up. A few summers ago among the Adirondacks I met the funeral procession of a man who, two days before, had fallen under a flash of lightning while boasting, after a Sunday of work in the fields, that he had cheated God out of one day anyhow; and the man who worked with him on the same Sabbath is still living, but a helpless invalid under the same flash. On the road from Margate to Ramsgate, England, you may find a rough monument with the inscription: A boy was struck dead here while in the act of swearing.

Years ago in a Pittsburg prison two men were talking about the Bible and Christianity, and one of them, Thompson by name, applied to Jesus Christ a very low and villainous epithet, and as he was uttering it he fell. A physician was called, but no help could be given. After lying a day with distended pupils and palsied tongue, he passed out of this world. In a cemetery in Sullivan County, New York, are eight head-stones in a line and all alike, and these are the facts: In 1861 diphtheria raged in the village, and a physician was remarkably successful in curing his patients. So confident did he become that he boasted that no case of diphtheria could stand before him, and finally defied Almighty God to produce a case of diphtheria that he could not cure. His youngest child soon after took the disease and died, and one child after another, until all the eight had died of diphtheria. The blasphemer challenged Almighty God, and God accepted the challenge. But I come later down and give you a fact that is proved by scores of witnessses. In August 1886 a man got provoked at the continued drouth and the ruin of his crops, and in the presence of his neighbors he cursed God, saying that he would cut his heart out if he would come, calling him a liar and a coward, and flashing a knife. And while he was speaking his lower jaw dropped, smoke issued from mouth and nostrils, and the heat of his body was so intense it drove back those who would come near. Scores of people visited the scene and saw the blasphemer in the awful process of expiring. Do not think that because God has been silent in your case, O, profane swearer! that he is dead. Is there nothing now in the peculiar feeling of your tongue, or nothing in the numbness of your brain that indicates that God may come to avenge your blasphemies, or is already avenging them? But these cases I have noticed, I believe, are only a few cases where there are hundreds. Families keep them still to avoid the horrible conspicuity. Physicians suppress them through professional confidence. It is a very, very, very long roll that contains the names of those who died with blasphmies on their lips; and still the crime rolls on, up through parlors, up through chandeliers with lights all ablaze, and through the pictured corridors of club-rooms, out through busy exchanges where oath meets oath, and down through all the haunts of sin, mingling with the rattling dice and cracking billiard-balls, and the laughter of her who has forgotted the covenant of her God; and round the city, and round the earth a seething boiling surge flings its hot spray into the face of a long suffering God. And the ship captain damns his crew, and the merchant damns his clerks, and the master builder damns his men, and the hack-driver damns his horses; and the traveler damns the stones that bruises his foot, or the mud that soils his shoes, or the defective time-piece that gets him too late to the railroad train. I arrange profane swearing and blasphemy, two names for the same thing, as being one of the gigantic crimes of this land, and for its extirpation it does seem as if it were about time for God to arise.

Then look a moment at the evil of drunkenness. Whether you live in Brooklyn or New York, or Chicago, or Cincinnati, or Savannah, or Boston, or in any of the cities of this land,

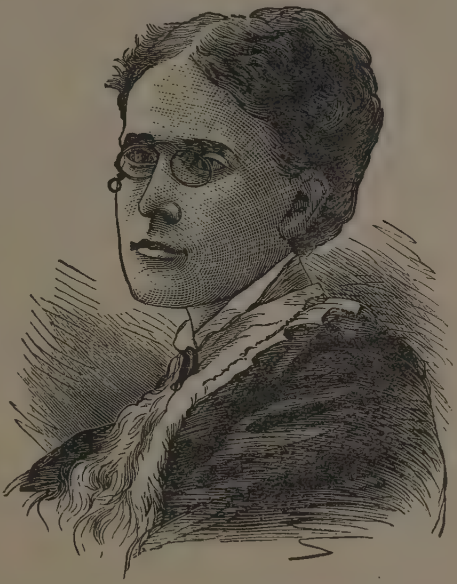


DRUNKARD PITCHED OUT.

count up the saloons on that street as compared with the saloons five years ago, and see they are growing far out of proportion to the increase of the population. You people who are so precise and particular lest there should be some imprudence or rashness in attacking the rum traffic, will have your son some night pitched into your front door dead drunk, or your daugter will come home with her children because her husband has by strong drink turned into a demoniac. The rum fiend has despoiled whole streets of good homes in all our cities. Fathers, brothers, sons, on the funeral pyre of strong drink! Fasten tighter the victims! Stir up the flames. Pile on the corpses! More men, women and children for the sacrifice! Let us have whole generations on fire of evil habit; and at the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer let all the people fall down and worship King Alcohol, or you shall be cast into the fiery furnace under some political platform! I indict this evil as the fratricide, the patricide, the matricide, the uxortcide, the regicide of the century. Yet under what innocent and delusive and mirthful names alcoholism decives the people. It is a "cordial." It is "bitters" It is an "eye-opener." It is an "appetizer." It is a "digester." It is an "invigorator." It is a "settler." It is a "night-cap." Why don't they put on the right labels—"Essence of Perdition," "Conscience Stupefier," "Five Drachms of Heartache," "Tears of Orphanage," "Blood of Souls," "Scabs of an Eternal Leprosy," "Venom of the Worm That Never Dies." Only once in a while is there anything in the title of liquors to even hint their atrocity, as in the case of sour mash. That I see advertised all over. It is an honest name and any one can understand it. Sour mash! That is, it makes a man's disposition sour, and his associations sour, and his prospects sour; and then it is good to mash his body, and mash his soul, and mash his business, and mash his family. Sour mash! One honest name at last for an intoxicant! But through lying labels of many of the apothecaries' shops good people, who are only a little undertone in health and wanting of some invigoration, have unwittingly got on their tongue the fangs of this cobra that stings to death so large a ratio of the human race.

Others are ruined by the common and all-destructive habit of treating customers. And it is a treat on their coming to town, and a treat while the bargaining progresses, and a treat when the purchase is made, and a treat as he leaves town. Others, to drown their troubles, submerge themselves with this worse trouble. Oh, the world is battered, and bruised, and blasted with this growing evil! It is more and more entranced and fortified. They have millions of dollars subscribed to marshal and advance the alcoholic forces. They nominate, and elect, and govern the vast majority of the office-holders of this country. On their side they have enlisted the mightiest political power of the centuries. And behind them stand all the myrmidons of the nether world, Satanic, and Apollyonic, and diabolic. It is beyond all human effort to throw this bastile of decanters or capture this Gibralter of rum jugs. And while I approve of all human agencies of reform, I would utterly despair, if we had nothing else. But what cheers me is that our best troops are yet to come. Our chief artillery is in reserve. Our greatest commander has not yet fully taken the field. If all hell is on their side, all heaven is on our side. Now "Let God arise; and let his enemies be scattered.

Then look at the impurities of these great cities. Ever and anon there are in the newspapers explosions of social life that make the story of Sodom quite respectable; for such things, Christ says, were more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the Chorazins and Bethsaidas of greater light. It is no unusual thing in our cities to see men in high position with two or three families, or refined ladies willing solemnly to marry the very swine of society if they be wealthy. Brooklyn, whose streets fifteen years ago were almost free from all sign of the social evil, now night by night rivaling upper Broadway in its flamboyant wickedness. The Bible all aflame with denunciation against an impure life, but many of the American ministry uttering not one point-blank word against this iniquity, lest some old libertine throw up his church pew. Machinery organized in all the cities of the United States and Canada by which to put yearly in the grinding mill of this iniquity thousands of the unsuspecting of the country farm-houses, one procuress confessing last week in the courts that she had supplied the infernal market with one hundred and fifty souls in six months. Oh, for five hundred *Pall Mall Gazettes* in America to swing open the door of this lazar-house of social corruption. Exposure must come before extirpation. While the city van carries the scum of this sin from the prison to the police court morning by mornnig, it is full time, if we do not want high American life to become like that of the court of Louis XV., to put millionaire Lotharios and Pompadours of your brown-stone palaces into a van of popular indignation, and drive them out of respectable associations. What prospect of social purification can there be as long as at summer watering places it is usual to see a young woman of excellent rearing stand, and simper, and giggle, and roll up her eyes sideways before one of those first-class satyrs of fashionable life, and on the ball-room floor join him in the square dance, the maternal chaperone meanwhile beaming from the wall on the scene? Matches are made in heaven, they say. Not such matches, for the brimstone indicates the opposite region. The evil is overshadowing all our cities. By some these immoralities are called peccadilloes, gallantries, eccentricities, and relegated to the realms of jocularity, and few efforts are being made against it. God bless the "White Cross" movement as it is called, the excellent and talented Miss Frances Willard, its ablest advocate on this side the sea, an organization making a mighty assault on this evil! God forward the tracts on this subject distributed by the religious tract societies of the land! God help parents in the great work they are doing in trying to start their children with pure principles! God help all legislators in their attempt to inhibit this crime. But is this all? Then it is only a question of time when the last vestige of purity and home will vanish out of sight. Human arms, human pens, human voices, human talents are not sufficient. I begin to look up. I listen for artillery rumbling down the sapphire boulevards of heaven. I watch to see if in the morning light there be not the flash of descending scimitars. Oh, for God! Does it not seem time for his appearance? Is it not time for all lands to cry out: "Let God arise; and let his enemies be scattered!"



Frances E. Willard.

I received a letter sometime ago asking me if I did not think that the earthquake in Charleston was the divine chastisement on that city for its sins. That letter I answer by saying that if all our American cities got all the punishment they deserve for their horrible impurities, the earth would long ago have cracked open into crevices transcontinental, and taken down all our cities; and Brooklyn and New York would have gone so far under that the tip of our church spires would be five hundred feet below the surface. It is of the Lord's mercies that we have not been consumed. Not only are the affairs of this world so a-twist, a-jangle and racked, that there seems a need of the divine appearance, but there is another reason. Have you noticed that in the history of this planet God turns a leaf about every two thousand years? God turned a leaf and this world was fitted for human residence. About two thousand years or more passed along and God turned another leaf, and it was the deluge. About two thousand years more passed on, and it was the appearance of Christ. Almost two thousand more years have passed by, and he will probably soon turn another leaf. What it shall be I cannot say. It may be the demolition of all these monstrosities of turpitude and the establishment of righteousness in all the earth. He can do it, and he will do it. I am as confident as if it were already accomplished. How easily he can do it. Let God arise! We do not ask God to strike with his right hand, or stamp with his foot, or hurl a thunderbolt of his power, but just to get up from the throne on which he sits. Only that will be necessary. It will be no exertion of omnipotence. It will be no bending or bracing for a mighty lift. It will be no sending down the sky of the white horse cavalry of heaven or rumbling war chariots. He will only rise. Now he is sitting in the majesty and patience of his reign. He is from his throne watching the mustering of all the forces of blasphemy and drunkenness and impurity and fraud and Sabbath-breaking, and when they have done their worst and are most securely organized, he will bestir himself and say: "My enemies have defied me long enough, and their cup of iniquity is full. I have given them all opportunity for repentance. This dispensation of patience is ended, and the faith of the good shall be tried no longer." And now God begins to rise, and what mountains give way under his right foot and what continents sink under his left foot I know not; but standing in the full height and radiance and grandeur of his nature, he looks this way and that, and how his enemies are scattered! Blasphemers, white and dumb, reel down to their doom; and those who have trafficked in that which destroys the bodies and souls of men and families will fly with cut foot on the down grade of broken decanters; and the polluters of society, that did their bad work with large fortunes and high social sphere, will overtake in their descent the degraded rabble of underground city life as they tumble over the eternal precipices; and the world shall be left clear and clean for the friends of humanity and the worshipers of Almighty God. The last thorn plucked off, the world will be left a blooming rose on the bosom of that Christ who came to gardenize it. This earth that stood snarling with its tigerish passion, thrusting out its raging claws, shall lie down a lamb at the feet of the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world.

And now the best thing I can wish for you, and the best thing I can wish for myself, is that we may be found his warm and undisguised and enthusiastic friends in that hour when God shall rise and his enemies shall be scattered.

CHAPTER X.

GAMBLING.

The money that Judas got for surrendering Christ was used to purchase a grave-yard. As the money was blood-money, the ground bought by it was called in the Syriac tongue, Aceldama, meaning "the field of blood." There is one word I want to write over every race-course where wagers are staked, and every pool-room, and every gambling saloon and every table, public or private, where men and women bet for sums of money, large or small, and that is a word incarnadined with the life of innumerable victims—Aceldama. The gambling spirit, which is at all times a stupendous evil, ever and anon sweeps over the country like an epidemic, prostrating uncounted thousands. There has never been a worse attack than that from which all the villages, towns and cities are now suffering. The farces recently enacted in Brooklyn court-room, by which it was proved that in the City of Churches there is not enough moral force to put into the Penitentiary the gambling jockeys who belong there, is only a specimen of the power gained by this abomination, which is brazen, sanguinary, trans-continental and hemispheric.

While among my readers are those who have passed on into the afternoon of life, and the shadows are lengthening, and the sky crimsons with the glow of the setting sun, a large number of them are in early life, and the morning is coming down out of the clear sky upon them, and the bright air is redolent with spring blossoms, and the stream of life, gleaming and glancing, rushes on between flowery banks, making music as it goes. Some of you are engaged in mercantile concerns, as clerks and book-keepers, and your whole life is to be passed in the exciting world of traffic. The sound of busy life stirs you as the drum stirs the fiery war-horse. Others are in the mechanical arts, to hammer and chisel your way through life, and success awaits you. Some are preparing for professional life, and grand opportunities are before you; nay, some of you already have buckled on the armor. But, whatever your age and calling, the subject of gambling is pertinent. Some years ago, when an association for the suppression of gambling was organized, an agent of the association came to a prominent citizen and asked him to patronize the society. He said: "No, I can have no interest in such an organization. I am in no wise affected by that evil." At that very moment his son, who was his partner in business, was one of the heaviest players in "Herne's" famous gambling establishment. Another refused his patronage on the same ground, not knowing that his first book-keeper, though receiving a salary of only a thousand dollars, was losing from fifty to one hundred dollars a night. The President of a railroad company refused to patronize the institution, saying: "That society is good for the defense of merchants, but we railroad people are not injured by this evil." Not knowing that, at that very time, two of his conductors were spending three nights of each week at faro tables. Directly or indirectly this evil strikes at the whole world. Gambling is the risking of something more or less valuable in the hope of winning more than you hazard. The instruments of gambling may differ, but the principle is the same. The shuffling and dealing cards, however full of temptation, is not gambling unless stakes are put up; while on the other hand, gambling may be carried on without cards, or dice, or billiards, or a ten-pin alley. The man who bets on horses, on elections, on battles, the man who deals in "fancy" stocks, or conducts a business which hazards extra capital, or goes into transactions without foundation, but dependent upon what men call "luck," is a gambler.

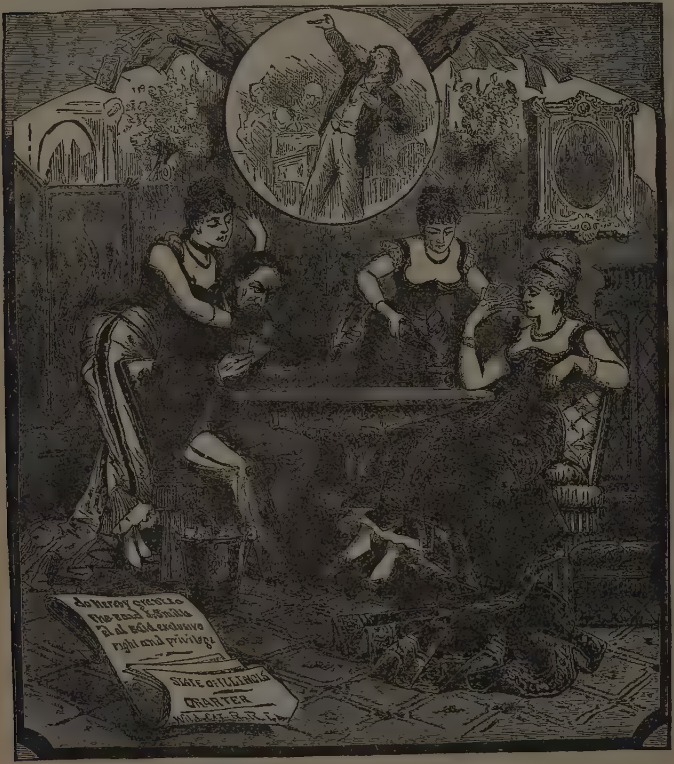
It is estimated that one-fourth of the business in London is done dishonestly. Whatever you expect to get from your neighbor without offering an equivalent in money, or time, or skill, is either the product of theft or gaming. Lottery tickets and lottery policies come into the same category. Fairs for the founding of hospitals, schools and churches, conducted on the raffling system, come under the same denomination. Do not, therefore, associate gambling necessarily with any instrument, or game, or time, or place, or think the principle depends upon whether you play for a glass of wine or one hundred shares of railroad stock. Whether you patronize "auction-pools" "French mutuals" or "book-making," whether you employ faro or billiards, rondo and keno, cards or bagatelle, the very idea of the thing is dishonest; for it professes to bestow upon you a good for which you give no equivalent. This crime is no new-born sprite, but a haggard transgression that comes staggering down under a mantle of curses through many centuries. All nations, barbarous and civilized have been addicted to it. Before 1838 the French Government received revenue from gaming houses. In 1567 England, for the improvement of her harbors, instituted a lottery to be held at the front door of St. Paul's Cathedral. Four hundred thousand tickets were sold at ten shillings each. The British Museum and Westminster bridge were partially built by similar procedures. The ancient Germans would sometimes put up themselves and families as prizes, and suffer themselves to be bound, though stronger than the persons who won them.

But now the laws of the whole civilized world denounce the system. Enactments have been passed, but only partially enforced, and at times not enforced at all. The men interested in gaming houses, and in jockey clubs, wield such influence by their numbers and affluence that the judge, the jury and the police officer must be bold indeed who would array themselves against these infamous establishments. The

House of Commons, of England, actually adjourns on Derby Day to go out and bet on the races; and in the best circles of society in this country to-day are many hundreds of professedly respectable men who are acknowledged gamblers. Hundreds of thousands of dollars in this land are every day being won and lost through sheer gambling. Says a traveler through the West: "I have traveled a thousand miles at a time upon the Western waters, and seen gambling at every waking moment from the commencement to the termination of the journey." The Southwest of this country reeks with this sin. In some of those cities every third or fourth house in many of the streets is a gaming place, and it may be truthfully averred that each of our cities is cursed with this evil.

In themselves most of the games employed in gambling are without harm. Billiard tables are as harmless as tea tables, and a pack of cards as a pack of letter envelopes, unless stakes be put up. But by their use for gambling purposes they have become significant of an infinity of wretchedness — six hundred gambling saloons in New York City when last counted. Men wishing to gamble, will find places just suited to their capacity, not only in the under-ground oyster cellar, or at the table back of the curtain, covered with greasy cards, or in the steamboat smoking cabin, where the bloated wretch with rings in his ears deals out his pack and winks at the unsuspecting traveler—providing free drinks all around—but in gilded parlors and amid gorgeous surroundings.

This sin works ruin first, by unhealthful stimulants. Excitement is pleasurable. Under every sky and in every age men have sought it. The Chinaman gets it by smoking his opium; the Persian by chewing hashish; the trapper in a buffalo-hunt; the sailor in a squall; the inebriate in the bottle, and the avaricious at the gaming table. We must at times have excitement. A thousand voices in our nature demand it. It is right. It is healthful. It is inspiriting. It is a desire God-given. But anything that first gratifies this appetite and hurls it back in a terrific reaction is deplorable and wicked. Look out for the agitation that, like a rough musician, in bringing out the tune plays so hard he breaks down the instrument. God never made man strong enough to endure the wear and tear of gambling excitement. No wonder if, after having failed in the game, men have begun to sweep off imaginary gold from the side of the table. The


do hereby grant to
all said exclusive
right and privilege
STATE OF ILLINOIS
CHARTER
WILD-CAT R.R.

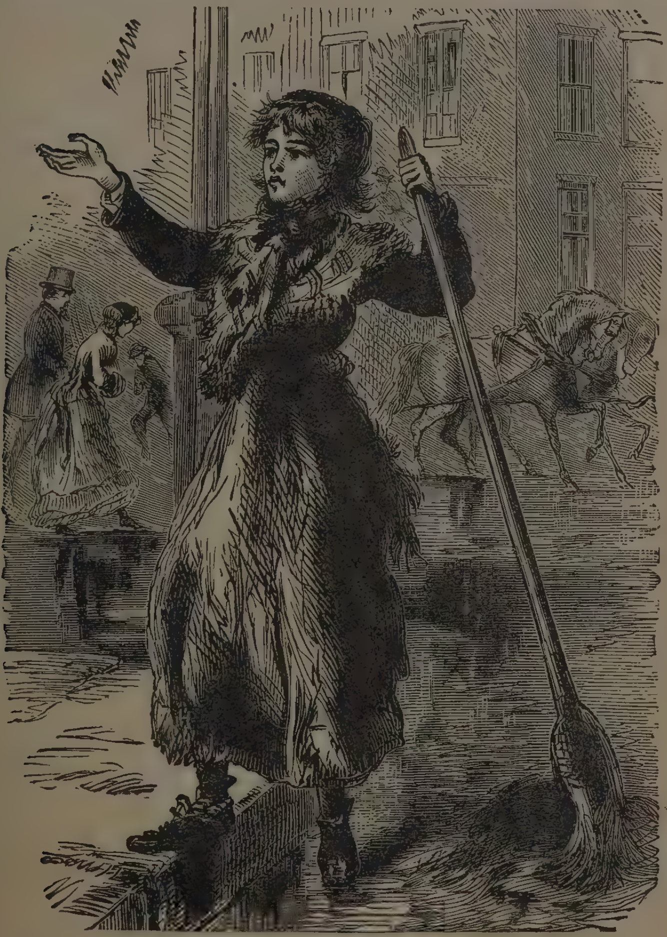
PRIVATE WINE AND GAMBLING ROOM.

man was sharp enough when he started at the game, but a maniac at the close. At every gaming table sit on one side Ecstasy, Enthusiasm, Romance—the frenzy of joy; on the other side Fierceness, Rage and Tumult. The professional gamester schools himself into apparent quietness. The keepers of gambling rooms are generally fat, rollicking and obese; but thorough and professional gamblers, in nine cases out of ten, are pale, thin, wheezing, tremulous and exhausted.

A young man having suddenly inherited a large property, sits at the hazard tables and takes up in a dice box the estate won by a father's lifetime sweat, and shakes it, and tosses it away. Intemperance soon stigmatizes its victim—kicking him out, a slavering fool, into the ditch, or sending him, with the drunkard's hiccough, staggering up the street where his family lives. But gambling does not in that way expose its victims. The gambler may be eaten up by the gambler's passion, yet you only discover it by the greed in his eyes, the hardness of his features, the nervous restlessness, the threadbare coat, and his embarrassed business. Yet he is on the road to hell, and no preacher's voice, or startling warning, or wife's entreaty, can make him stay for a moment his headlong career. The infernal spell is on him; a giant is aroused within, and though you bind him with cables, they would part like thread, and though you fasten him seven times round with chains, they would snap like rusted wire; and though you piled up in his path heaven-high, Bibles, tracts and sermons, and on the top should set the cross of the Son of God, over them all the gambler would leap like a roe over the rocks, on his way to perdition.

Again, this sin works ruin by killing industry. A man used to reaping scores or hundreds of dollars from the gaming table will not be content with slow work. He will say: "What is the use of trying to make these fifty dollars in my store when I can get five times that in half an hour down at

Billy's?" You never knew a confirmed gambler who was industrious. The men given to this vice spend their time, not actively employed in the game, in idleness, or intoxication, or sleep, or in corrupting new victims. This sin has dulled the carpenter's saw and cut the band of the factory wheel, sunk the cargo, broken the teeth of the farmer's harrow, and sent a strange lightning to shatter the battery of the philosopher. The very first idea in gaming is at war with all the industries of society. Any trade or occupation that is of use is ennobling. The street-sweeper advances the interests of socitey by the cleanliness effected. The cat pays for the fragments it eats by cleaning the house of virmin. The fly that takes the sweetness from the dregs of the cup, compensates by purifying the air and keeping back the pestilence. But the gambler gives not anything for that which he takes. I recall that sentence. He does make a return; but it is a disgrace to the man he fleeces, despair to his heart, ruin to his business, anguish to his wife, shame to his children, and eternal wasting away to his soul. He pays in tears and blood and agony and darkness and woe. What dull work is plowing to the farmer when in the village saloon in one night he makes and loses the value of a summer harvest! Who will want to sell tape and measure nankeen, and cut garments, and weigh sugars, when in a night's game he makes and loses, and makes again and loses again the profits of a season? John Borack was sent as mercantile agent from Bremen to England and this country. After two years his employers mistrusted that all was not right. He was a defaulter for eighty-seven thousand dollars. It was found that he lost in Lombard street, London, twenty-nine thousand dollars, in Fulton street, New York, ten thousand dollars, and in New Orleans, three thousand dollars. He was imprisoned, but afterward escaped, and went into the gambling profession. He died in a lunatic asylum. This crime is getting its lever under many a mercantile house in our cities, and before long down will come the great establishment, crushing reputation, home comfort and immortal souls. How it diverts and sinks capital may be inferred from some authentic statements



THE STREET SWEEPER.

before us. The ten gaming houses that once were authorized in Paris passed through the banks yearly three hundred and twenty-five million francs.

Where does all the money come from? The whole world is robbed! What is most sad, there are no consolations for the loss and suffering entailed by gaming. If men fall in lawful business, God pities and society commiserates; but where, in the Bible or society, is there any consolation for the gambler? From what tree of the forest oozes there a balm that can soothe the gamester's heart? In that bottle where God keeps the tears of his children, are there any tears of the gambler? Do the winds that come to kiss the faded cheek of sickness and to cool the heated brow of the laborer, whisper hope and cheer to the emaciated victim of the game of hazard? When an honest man is in trouble, he has sympathy. "Poor fellow!" they say. But, do gamblers come to weep at the agonies of the gambler? In Northumberland was one of the finest estates in England. Mr. Porter owned it, and in a year gambled it all away. Having lost the last acre of the estate, he came down from the saloon and got into his carriage; went back; put up his horses and carriage and town house and played. He threw and lost. He started for home, and on a side alley met a friend, from whom he borrowed ten guineas; he went back to the saloon, and before a great while, had won twenty thousand pounds. He died at last a beggar in St. Giles. How many gamblers felt sorry for Mr. Porter? Who consoled him on the loss of his estate? What gambler subscribed to put a stone over the poor man's grave? Not one! Furthermore, this sin is the source of uncounted dishonesty. The game of hazard itself is often a a cheat. How many tricks and deceptions in the dealing of the cards! The opponent's hand is ofttimes found out by fraud. Cards are marked so that they may be designated from the back. Expert gamesters have their accomplices, and one wink may decide the game. The dice have been found loaded with platina, so that doublets come up every time. These dice are introduced by the gamblers unobserved by the honest men who have come into the play, and this accounts for the fact that ninety-nine out of a hundred who gamble, however wealthy when they began, at the end are found to be poor, miserable, haggard wretches, that would not now be allowed to sit on the doorstep of the house that they once owned. In a gaming-house in San Francisco, a young man having just come from the mines deposited a large sum upon the race and won twenty-two thousand dollars. But the tide turns. Intense anxiety comes upon the countenances, of all. Slowly the cards went forth. Every eye is fixed. Not a sound is heard, until the ace is revealed favorable to the bank. There are shouts of "Foul! foul!" but the keepers of the table produce their pistols, and the uproar is silenced and the bank has won ninety-five thousand dollars. Do you call this a game of chance? There is no chance about it. But these dishonesties in the carrying on of the game are nothing when compared with the frauds that are committed in order to get money to go on with the nefarious work. Gambling, with its needy hand, has snatched away the widow's mite and the portion of the orphans; has sold the daughter's virtue to get the means to continue the game; has written the counterfeit's signature, emptied the banker's money vault, and wielded the assassin's dagger. There is no depth of meanness to which it will not stoop. There is no cruelty at which it is appalled. There is no warning of God that it will not dare. Merciless, unappeasable, fiercer and wilder it blinds, it hardens, it rends, it blasts, it crushes, it damns. It has peopled our prisons and lunatic asylums.

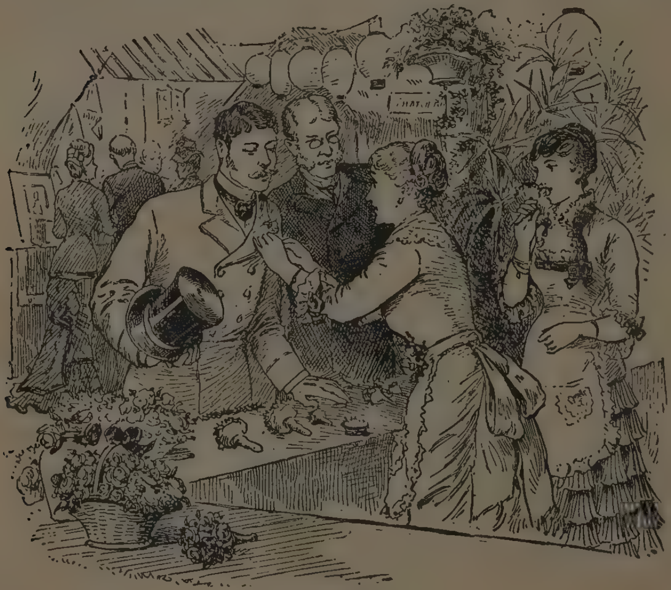
How many railroad agents, and cashiers and trustees of funds it has driven to disgrace, incarceration and suicide. Witness years ago a cashier of the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia who stole one hundred and three thousand dollars to carry on his gaming practices. Witness the forty thousand dollars stolen from a Brooklyn bank within the memory of many, and the one hundred and eighty thousand dollars taken from a Wall street insurance company for the same purpose. These are only illustrations on a large scale of the robberies committed for the purpose of carrying out the designs of gamblers. Hundreds of thousands of dollars every year leak out without observation from the merchant's till into the gambling hell. A man in London keeping one of these gambling houses boasted that he had ruined a nobleman in a day; but if all the saloons of this land were to speak out, they might utter a more infamous boast, for they have destroyed a thousand noblemen a year. Notice also the effect of this crime upon domestic happiness. It has sent its ruthless ploughshare through hundreds of families, until the wife sat in rags, and the daughters were disgraced, and the sons grew up to the same infamous practices, or took a short cut to destruction across the murderer's scaffold. Home has lost all charms for the gambler. How tame are the children's caresses and a wife's devotion to the gambler! How drearily the fire burns on the domestic hearth! There must be louder laughter, and something to win, and something to lose; an excitement to drive the heart faster, fill up the blood and fire the imagination. No home, however bright, can keep back the gamester. The sweet call of love bounds back from his iron soul, and all endearments are consumed in the fire of his passion. The family Bible will go after all other treasures are lost, and if his crown in heaven were put into his hand he would cry: "Here goes one more game, my boys. On this one throw I stake my crown of heaven."

An only son went to New Orleans. He was rich, intellectual and elegant in manners. His parents gave him, on his departure from home, their last blessing. The sharpers got hold of him. They flattered him. They lured him to the gaming-table and let him win almost every time for a good while, and patted him on the back and said, "First-rate player." But fully in their grasp they fleeced him, and his thirty thousand dollars were lost. Last of all, he put up his watch and lost that. Then he began to think of his home and of his old father and mother, and wrote thus:

"My Beloved Parents: You will doubtless feel a momentary joy at the reception of this letter from the child of your bosom, on whom you have lavished all the favors of your declining years. But should a feeling of joy for a moment spring up in your hearts when you should have received this from me, cherish it not. I have fallen deep, never to rise. Those gray hairs that I should have honored and protected I shall bring down in sorrow to the grave. I will not curse my destroyer; but, Oh, may God avenge the wrongs and impositions practiced upon the unwary in a way that shall best please Him! This, my dear parents, is the last letter you will ever receive from me. I humbly pray your forgiveness. It is my dying prayer. Long before you will have received this from me the cold grave will have closed upon me forever. Life to me is insupportable. I can not, no, I will not, suffer the shame of having ruined you. Forget and forgive is the dying prayer of your unfortunate son."

The old father came to the post office, got the letter and fell to the floor. They thought he was dead at first, but they brushed back the white hair from his brow and fanned him. He had only fainted. I wish he had been dead, for what is life worth to a father after his son is destroyed? When things go wrong at a gaming table they shout: "Foul! foul!" Over all the gaming tables of the world I cry out: "Foul! foul! Infinitely foul!"

"Gift stores" are abundant throughout the country. With a book, or knife, or sewing-machine, or coat, or carriage, there goes a prize. At these stores people get something thrown in with their purchase. It may be a gold watch, o set of silver, a ring, or a farm. Sharp way to get off unsalable goods. It has filled the land with fictitious articles, and covered up our population with brass finger rings, and despoiled the moral sense of the community, and is fast making a nation of gamblers. The church of God has not seemed willing to allow the world to have all the advantage



A CHURCH FAIR.

of these games of chance. A church fair opens, and toward the close it is found that some of the more valuable articles are unsalable. Forthwith, the conductors of the enterprise conclude that they will raffle for some of the valuable articles, and, under pretense of anxiety to make their minister a present or please some popular member of the church, fascinating persons are dispatched through the room, pencil in hand to "solicit shares," or perhaps each draws for his own advantage, and scores of people go home with their trophies, thinking that is all right, for Christian ladies did the embroidery and Christian men did the raffling, and the proceeds went toward a new communion set. But you may depend on it, that as far as morality is concerned, you might as well have won by the crack of the billiard ball or the turn of the dice box. Do you wonder that churches built, lighted, or upholstered by such processes as that come to great financial and spiritual decrepitude? The devil says: "I helped to build that house of worship, and I have as much right there as you have." And for once the devil is right. We do not read that they had a lottery, for building the church at Corinth, or at Antioch, or for getting up an embroidered surplice for Saint Paul. All this I style ecclesiastical gambling. More than one man who is destroyed can say that his first step on the wrong road was when he won something at a church fair.

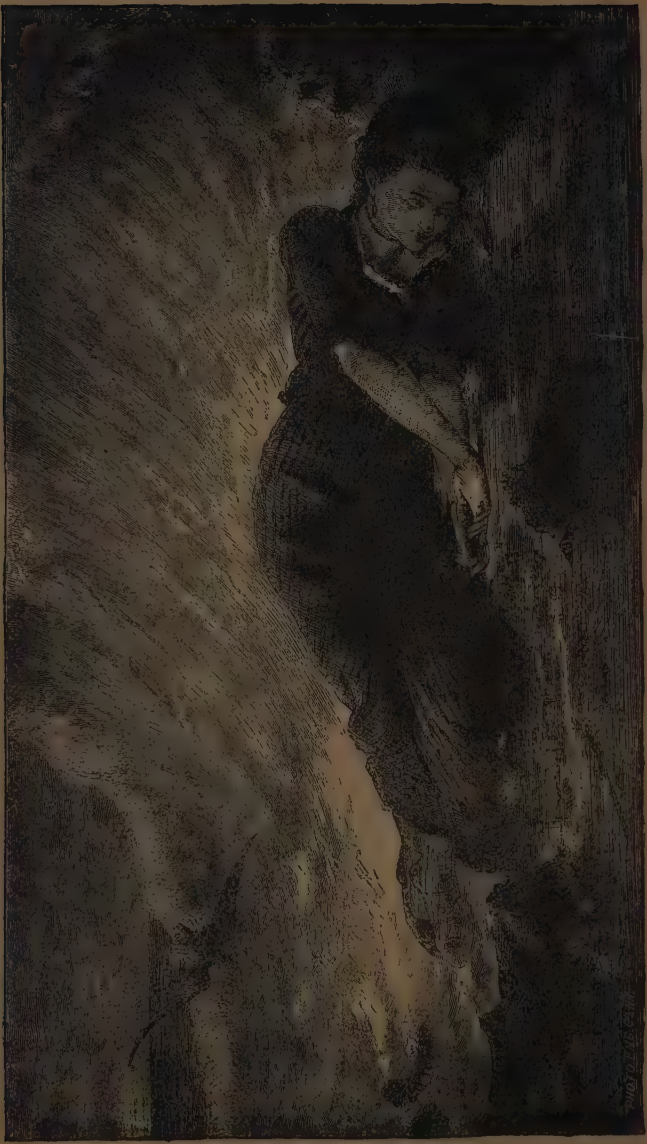
The gambling spirit has not stopped for any indecency. There transpired in Maryland a lottery in which people drew for lots in a burying ground! The modern habit of writing about everything is productive of immense mischief. The most healthful and innocent amusements of yachting and base ball playing have been the occasion of putting up excited and extravagant wagers. That which to many has been advantageous to body and mind has been to others the means of financial and moral loss. The custom is pernicious in the extreme where scores of men in respectable life give themselves up to betting, now on this boat, now on that; now on this ball club, now on that. Betting, that once was chiefly the accompaniment of the race-course, is fast becoming a national habit, and in some circles any opionion advanced on finance or politics is accosted with the interrogation: "How much will you bet on that, sir?" This custom may make no appeal to slow, leathargic temperaments, but there are in the country tens of thousands of quick, nervous, sanguine, excitable temperaments ready to be acted upon, and their feet will soon take hold on death. For some months, and perhaps for years, they will linger in the more polite and elegant circle of gamesters, but after a while their pathway will come to the final plunge. Finding themselves in the rapids, they will try to back out, and hurled over the brink, they will clutch the side of the boat until their finger-nails, blood-tipped, will pierce the wood, and then, with white cheek and agonized stare, and the horrors of the lost soul lifting the very hair from the scalp, they will plunge down where no grappling-hooks can drag them out.

Young man! stand back from all styles of gambling. The end thereof is death. The ten-pin alley affords the best of physical exercise, and many an hour have I passed in some such place, getting physical invigoration; but many of the ten-pin alleys are now given up to gambling practices. Husbands, brothers, fathers, enter. Put down your thousand dollars all in gold eagles! Let the boy set up the pins at the other end of the alley! Now stand back and give the gamester full sweep! Roll the first—there! it strikes! and down goes his respectability! Try it again! Roll the second—there! it strikes! and down goes the last feeling of humanity! Try it again. Roll the third—there! it strikes! and down goes his soul forever! It was not so much the pins that fell, as the soul! the soul! Fatal ten-strike for eternity!

I will sketch the history of the gambler. Lured by bad company he finds his way into a place where an honest man ought never to go. He sits down to his first game, but only for pastime and the desire of being thought sociable. The players deal out the cards. They unconsciously play into Satan's hands, who takes all the tricks and both the players' souls for trumps—he being a sharper at any game. A slight stake is put up, just to add interest to the play. Game after game is played. Larger stakes and still larger. They begin to move nervously on their chairs. Their brows lower, and eyes flash, until now they who win and they who lose, fired alike with passion, sit with set jaws, and compressed lips, and clenched fists, and eyes like fire-balls that seem starting from their sockets to see the final turn before it comes; if losing, pale with envy and tremulous with unuttered oaths cast back red-hot upon the heart—or winning, with hysteric laugh—"ha! ha! I have it!" A few years have passed, and he is only the wreck of a man. Seating himself at the game, ere he throws the first card, he stakes the last relic of his wife—the marriage ring which sealed the solemn vows between them. The game is lost, and staggering back in confusion he dreams. The bright hours of the past mock his agony, and in his dreams friends with eyes of fire and tongues of flame circle about him with joined hands to dance and sing their orgies with hellish chorus, chanting: "Hail, brother!" kissing his clammy forehead until their loathsome locks flowing with serpents, crawl into his bosom and suck up his life's blood, and coiling round his heart pinch it with chills and shudders unutterable.

Take warning! You are no stronger than tens of thousands who have by this practice been overthrown. No young man in our cities can escape being tempted. Beware of the first beginning! This road is down-grade, and every instant increases the momentum. Launch not upon this treacherous sea. Splint hulks strew the beach. Everlasting storms howl up and down, tossing unwary crafts into the hell-gate. I speak of what I have seen with my own eyes. I have looked off into the abyss and have seen the foaming and the hissing and the whirling of the horrid deep in which the mangled victims writhed, one upon another, and struggled, strangled, blasphemed and died—the death-stare of eternal despair upon their countenances as the water gurgled over them!

To a gambler's death bed there comes no hope. He will probably die alone. His former associates come not nigh his dwelling. When the hour comes, his miserable soul will go out of his miserable life into a miserable eternity. As his poor remains pass the house where he was ruined, old companions may look out a moment and say: "There goes the old carcase—dead at last!" but they will not get up from the table. Let him down now into his grave. Plant no tree to cast its shade there, for the long deep eternal gloom that settles there, is shadow enough. Plant no "forget-me-nots" or eglantines around the spot, for flowers were not made to grow on such a blasted heath. Visit it not in the sunshine for that would be mockery, but in the dismal night, when no stars are out, and the spirits of darkness come down horsed on the wind, then visit the grave of the gambler.



WILL GOD FORGIVE HER?

CHAPTER XI.

SUICIDE.

In olden time, and where Christianity had not interfered with it, suicide was considered honorable and a sign of courage. Demosthenes poisoned himself when told that Alexander's ambassador had demanded the surrender of the Athenian orators. Isocrates killed himself rather than surrender to Philip of Macedon. Cato, rather than submit to Julius Cæsar, took his own life, and after three times his wounds had been dressed tore them open and perished. Mithridates killed himself rather than submit to Pompey, the conqueror. Hannibal destroyed his life by poison from his ring, considering life unbearable. Lycurgus a suicide, Brutus a suicide. After the disaster of Moscow, Napoleon always carried with him a preparation of opium, and one night his servant heard the ex-emperor arise, put something in a glass and drink it, and soon after the groans aroused all the attendants, and it was only through utmost medical skill he was resuscitated from the stupor of the opiate.

Times have changed, and yet the American conscience needs to be toned up on the subject of suicide. Have you seen a paper lately that did not announce the passage out of life by one's own behest? Defaulters, alarmed at the idea of exposure, quit life precipitately. Men losing large fortunes go out of the world because they cannot endure earthly existence. Frustrated affection, domestic infelicity, dyspeptic impatience, anger, remorse, envy, jealousy, destitution, misanthropy are considered sufficient causes for absconding from this life by Paris green, by laudanum, by belladonna, by Othello's dagger, by halter, by leap from the abutment of a bridge, by fire-arms. More cases of *felo de se* in the last two years than any two years of the world's existence, and more in the last month than in any twelve months. The evil is more and more spreading.

A pulpit not long ago expressed some doubt as to whether there was really anything wrong about quitting this life when it became disagreeable, and there are found in respectable circles people apologetic for the crime which I hope to show is the worst of all crimes, and I shall lift a warning unmistakable. But I wish to admit that some of the best Christians that have ever lived have committed self-destruction, but always in dementia, and not responsible. I have no more doubt about their eternal felicity than I have of the Christian who dies in his bed in the delirium of typhoid fever. While the shock of the catastrophe is very great, I charge all those who have had Christian friends under cerebral aberration step off the boundaries of this life to have no doubt about their happiness. The dear Lord took them right out of their dazed and frenzied state into perfect safety. How Christ feels toward the insane you may know from the kind way He treated the demoniac of Gadara and the child lunatic, and the potency with which he hushed the tempests either of sea or brain.

Scotland, the land prolific of intellectual giants, had none grander than Hugh Miller. Great for science and great for God. He came of the best Highland blood, and was a descendant of Donald Roy, a man eminent for piety and the rare gift of second-sight. His attainments, climbing up as he did from the quarry and the wall of the stone-mason, drew forth the astonished admiration of Buckland and Murchison, the scientists, and Dr. Chalmers, the theologian, and held universities spell-bound while he told them the story of what he had seen of God in the old red sandstone. That man did more than any being that ever lived to show that the God of the hills is the God of the Bible, and he struck his tuning-fork on the rocks of Cromarty until he brought geology and theology accordant in divine worship. His two books, entitled "Footprints of the Creator" and the "Testimony of the Rocks" proclaimed the banns of an everlasting marriage between genuine and science and revelation. On this latter book he toiled day and night through love of nature and love of God, until he could not sleep, and his brain gave way, and he was found dead with a revolver by his side, the cruel instrument having had two bullets—one for him and the other for the gunsmith who for the coroner's inquest was examining it and fell dead. Have you any doubt of the beatification of Hugh Miller, after his hot brain had ceased throbbing that winter night in his study at Portobello? Among the mightiest of earth, among the mightiest of heaven.

While we make this merciful and righteous allowance in regard to those who were plunged into mental incoherence, I declare that that man who in the use of his reason, by his own act, snaps the bond between his body and his soul goes straight into perdition. Shall I prove it? Revelation 21:8: "Murderers shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." Revelation 22:15: "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers." You do not believe the New Testament? Then, perhaps, you believe the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt not kill." Do you say all these passages refer to the taking of the life of others? Then I ask you if you are not as responsible for your own life as for the life of others? God gave you a special trust in your life. He made you the custodian of your life as He made you the custodian of no other life. He gave you as weapons with which to defend it two arms to strike back assailants, two eyes to watch for invasion, and a natural love of life which ought ever to be on the alert. Assassination of others is a mild crime compared with the assassination of yourself, because in the latter case it is treachery to an especial trust, it is the surrender of a castle you were especially appointed to keep, it is treason to a natural law and it is treason to God added to ordinary murder.

Notwithstanding the Bible is against this evil, and the aversion which it creates by the loathsome and ghastly spectacle of those who have hurled themselves out of life, and notwithstanding Christianity is against it, and the arguments and the useful lives and the illustrious deaths of its disciples, it is a fact alarmingly patent that suicide is on the increase. What is the cause? I charge upon Infidelity and Agnosticism this whole thing. If there be no hereafter, or if that hereafter be blissful without reference to how we live and how we die, why not move back the folding doors between this world and the next? And when our existence here becomes troublesome, why not pass right over into Elysium? Put this down among your most solemn reflections, and consider it; there has never been a case of suicide where the operator was not either demented, and therefore irresponsible, or an infidel. I challenge all the ages, and I challenge the whole universe. There never has been a case of self-destruction while in full appreciation of his immortality and of the fact that that immortality would be glorious or wretched according as he accepted Jesus Christ or rejected Him.

You say it is business trouble, or you say it is electrical currents, or it is this, or it is that, or it is the other thing. Why not go clear back, my friend, and acknowledge that in every case it is the abdication of reason or the teaching of infidelity, which practically says, "If you don't like this life get out of it, and you will land either in annihilation, where there are no notes to pay, no persecutions to suffer, no gout to torment, or you will land where there will be everything glorious and nothing to pay for it. Infidelity always has been apologetic for self-immolation. After Tom Paines's "Age of Reason" was published and widely read there was a marked increase of self-slaughter. A man in London heard

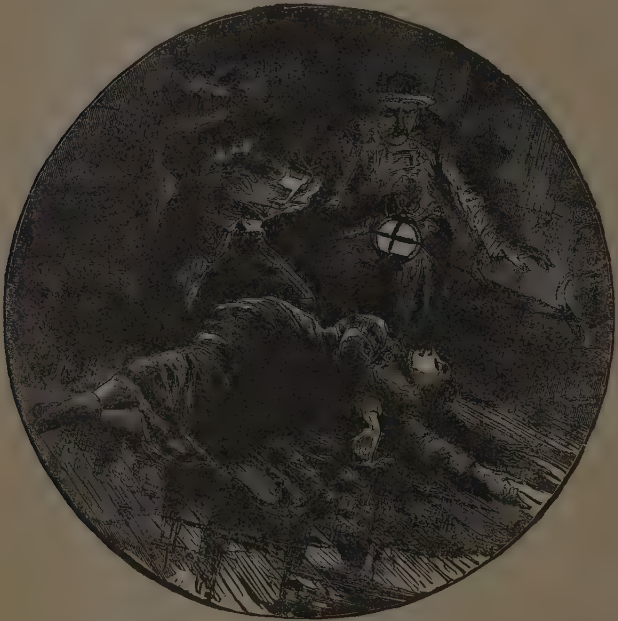
Mr. Owen deliver his infidel lecture on Socialism, and went home, sat down, and wrote these words: "Jesus Christ is one of the weakest characters in history, and the Bible is the greatest possible deception," and then shot himself. David Hume wrote these words: "It would be no crime for me to divert the Nile or the Danube from its natural bed. Where, then, can be the crime in my diverting a few drops of blood from their ordinary channel?" And having written the essay he loaned it to a friend; the friend read it, wrote a letter of thanks and admiration, and shot himself.

Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon, Montaigne, under certain circumstances, were apologetic for self-immolation. Infidelity puts up no bar to people's rushing out from this world into the next. They teach us it does not make any difference how you live here or go out of this world, you will land either in an oblivious nowhere or a glorious somewhere. And Infidelity holds the upper end of the rope for the suicide, and aims the pistol with which a man blows his brains out, and mixes the strychnine for the last swallow. If Infidelity could carry the day and persuade the majority of people in this country that it does not make any difference how you go out of the world you will land safely, the rivers would be so full of corpses the ferry-boats would be impeded in their progress, and the crack of a suicide's pistol would be no more alarming than the rumble of a street car.

I have sometimes heard it discused whether the great dramatist was a Christian or not. I do not know, but I know that he considered appreciation of a future existence the mightiest hindrance to self-destruction:

> For who could bear the whips and scorns of time,
> The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
> The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
> When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death—
The undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns—puzzles the will.



ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE.

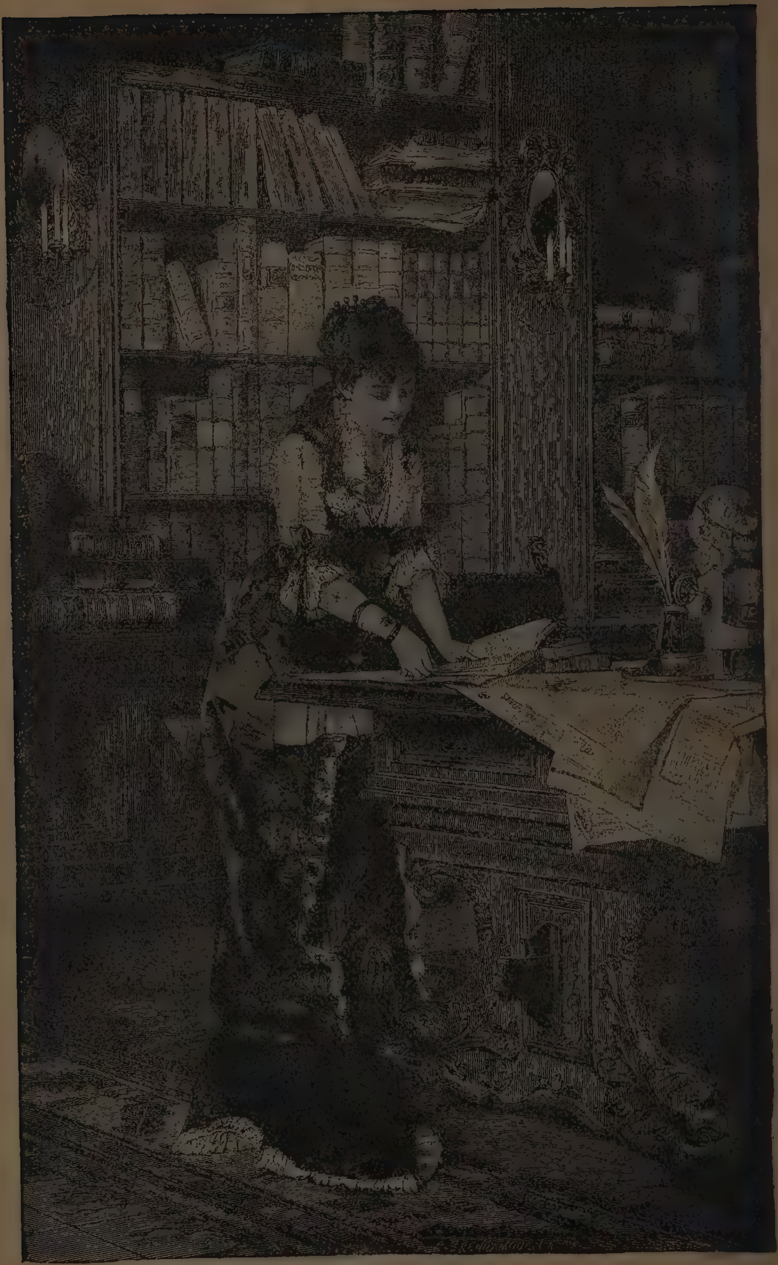
Would God that the coroners would be brave in rendering the right verdict, and when in a case of irresponsibility they say, "While this man was demented he took his life;" in the other case say, "Having read infidel books and attended infidel lectures, which obliterated from this man's mind all appreciation of anything like future retribution, he committed self-slaughter!" Ah! Infidelity, stand up and take thy sentence! In the presence of God and angels and men, stand up, thou monster, thy lip blasted with blasphemy, thy cheek scarred with lust, thy breath foul with the corruption of the ages! Stand up, Satyr, filthy goat, buzzard of the nations, leper of the centuries! Stand up, thou monster Infidelity! Part man, part panther, part reptile, part dragon, stand up and take thy sentence! Thy hands red with the blood in which thou hast washed, thy feet crimson with the human gore through which thou hast waded, stand up and take thy sentence! Down with thee to the pit and sup on the sobs and groans of families thou hast blasted, and roll on the bed of knives which thou has sharpened for others, and let thy music be the everlasting *miserere* of those whom thou hast damned! I brand the forehead of Infidelity with all the crimes of self-immolation for the last century on the part of those who had their reason.

If ever your life through its abrasions and its molestations should seem to be unbearable and you are tempted to quit it by your own behest, do not consider yourselves as worse than others. Christ Himself was tempted to cast Himself from the roof of the temple; but as He resisted, so resist ye. Christ came to medicine all our wounds. In your trouble I prescribe life instead of death. People who have had it worse than you will ever have it have gone songful on the way. Remember that God keeps the chronology of your life with as much precision as He keeps the chronology of nations, your death as well as your birth, your grave as well as your cradle.

Why was it that at midnight, just at midnight, the destroying angel struck the blow that set the Israelites free from bondage? The four hundred and thirty years were up at twelve o'clock that night. The four hundred and thirty years were not up at eleven and one o'clock would have been to tardy and too late. The four hundred and thirty years were up at twelve o'clock, and the destroying angel struck the blow, and Israel was free. And God knows just the hour when it is time to lead you up from earthly bondage. By His grace make not the worst of things, but the best of them. If you must take the pills, do not chew them. Your everlasting rewards will accord with your earthly perturbations, just as Caius gave to Agrippa a chain of gold as heavy as had been his chain of iron.

Remember that this brief life of ours is surrounded by a rim, a very thin but very important rim, and close up to that rim is a great eternity, and you had better keep out of it until God breaks that rim and separates this from that. To get rid of the sorrows of earth, do not rush into greater sorrows. To get rid of a swarm of summer insects, leap not into a jungle of Bengal tigers.

There is a sorrowless world, and it is so radiant that the noonday sun is only the lowest doorstep and the aurora that lights up our northern heavens, confounding astronomers as to what it can be, is the waving of the banners of the procession come to take the conquerors home from church militant to church triumphant, and you and I have ten thousand reasons for wanting to go there, but we will never get there either by self-immolation or impenitency. All our sins slain by the Christ who came to do that thing, we want to go in at just the time divinely arranged, and from a couch divinely spread, and then the clang of the sepulchral gates behind us will be overpowered by the clang of the opening of the solid pearl before us. O God, whatever others may choose, give me a Christian's life, a Christian's death, a Christian's burial, a Christian's immortality!



GOOD BOOKS

After C. Kiesel

CHAPTER XII.

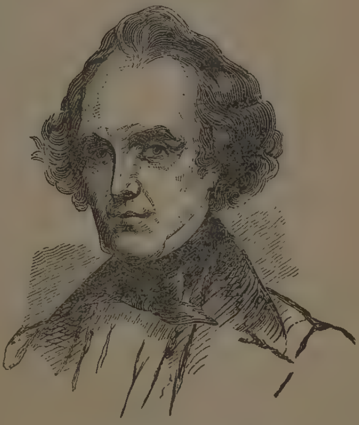
IMMORAL LITERATURE.

Paul stirred up Ephesus with some lively sermons about the sins of that place. Among the most important results was the fact that the citizens brought out their bad books and in a public place made a bonfire of them. I see the people coming out with their arms full of Ephesian literature, and tossing it into the flames. I hear an economist standing by and saying: "Stop this waste. Here are seven thousand and five hundred dollars worth of books—do you propose to burn them all up? If you don't want to read them yourself, sell them and let somebody else read them." "No," said the people, "if these books are not good for us, they are not good for anybody else and we shall stand and watch until the last leaf has turned to ashes. They have done us a world of harm, and they shall never do others harm. One of the wants of the cities of this country is a great bonfire of bad books and newspapers. We have enough fuel to make a blaze two hundred feet high. Many of the publishing houses would do well to throw into the blaze their entire stock of goods. Bring forth the insufferable trash and put it into the fire, and let it be known in the presence of God, and angels and men, that you are going to rid your homes of the overtopping and underlying curse of profligate literature.

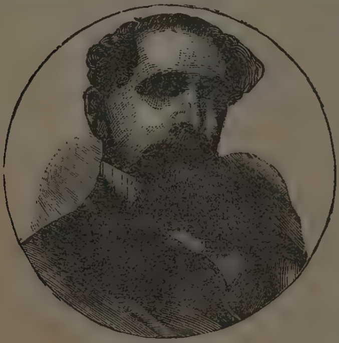
The printing press is the mightiest agency on earth for good and for evil. The minister of the Gospel, standing in a pulpit has a responsible position; but I do not think it is as responsible as the position of an editor or a publisher. At what distant point of time, at what far out cycle of eternity, will cease the influence of a Henry J. Raymond, or a Horace

Greeley, or a James Gordon Bennett, or a Watson Webb, or an Eratus Brooks, or a Thomas Kinsella? Take the simple statistic that the New York dailies now have a circulation of about eight hundred and fifty thousand per day, and add to it the fact that three of the weekly periodicals have an aggregate circulation of about one million, and then cipher, if you can, how far up, and how far down, and how far out, reach the influences of the American printing-press. What is to be the issue of all this? I believe the Lord intends the printing-press to be the chief means for the world's rescue and evangelization, and I think that the great last battle of the world will not be fought with swords and guns, but with types and presses—a purified and gospel literature triumphing over, trampling down and crushing out forever that which is depraved. The only way to overcome unclean literature is by scattering abroad that which is healthful. May God speed the cylinders of an honest, intelligent, aggressive, Christian printing-press. The greatest blessing that ever came to this nation is that of an elevated literature, and the greatest scourge has been that of unclean literature. This last has its victims in all occupations and departments. It has helped to fill insane asylums and penitentiaries and almshouses and dens of shame. The bodies of this infections lie in the hospitals and in the graves, while their souls are being tossed over into a lost eternity, an avalanche of horror and despair. The London plague was nothing to it. That counted its victims by thousands, but this modern pest has already shoveled its millions into the charnel-house of the morally dead. The longest rail train that ever ran over the Erie or Hudson tracks was not long enough nor large enough to carry the beastliness and the putrefaction which have been gathered up in bad books and newspapers of this land in the last twenty years.

Now, it is amid such circumstances that I put a question of overmastering importance to you and your families. What books and newspapers shall we read? You see a group of them together. A newspaper is only a book in a swifter and more portable shape, and the same rules which will apply to book reading will apply to newspaper reading. What shall we read? Shall our minds be the receptacle of everything that an author has a mind to write? Shall there be no distinction between the tree of a life and the tree of death? Shall we stoop down and drink out of the trough which the wickedness of men has filled with pollution and shame? Shall we mire in impurity and chase fantastic will-o'-the-wisps across the swamps, when we might walk in the blooming gardens of God? O no! For the sake of our present and everlasting welfare we must make an intelligent and Christian choice. Standing, as we do, chin deep in fictitious literature, the first question that many of the young people are asking me is: "Shall we read novels?" I reply: There are novels that are pure, good, Christian, elevating to the heart and ennobling to the life. But I have still further to say that I believe that ninety-nine out of the hundred novels in this day are baleful and destructive to the last degree. A pure work of fiction is history and poetry combined. It is a history of things around us, with the licenses and the assumed names of poetry. The world can never pay the debt which it owes to such fictitious writers as Hawthorne and McKenzie, and Lander and Hunt, and Arthur and Marion Harland, and others whose names are familiar to all. The follies of high life were never better exposed than by Miss


NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Edgeworth. The memories of the past were never more faithfully embalmed than in the writings of Walter Scott. Cooper's novels are healthfully redolent with the breath of the sea-weed, and the air of the American forest. Charles Kingsley has smitten the morbidity of the world, and led a great many to appreciate the poetry of sound health, strong muscles, and fresh air. Thackeray did a grand work in caricaturing the pretenders to gentility and high blood. Dickens has built his own monument in his books, which are an everlasting plea for the poor, and the anathema of injustice.


CHARLES DICKENS.

Now, I say, books like these, read at right times, and read in right proportion with other books, can not help but be ennobling and purifying; but alas for the impure literature that has come upon this country in the shape of novels, like a freshet overflowing all the banks of decency and common sense! They are coming from some of the most celebrated publishing houses of the country. They are coming with recommendation of some of our religious newspapers. They lie on your center table to curse your children, and blast with their infernal fires generations unborn. You find these books in the desk of the school miss, in the trunk of the young man, in the steamboat cabin, on the table of the hotel reception room. You see a light in your child's room late at night. You suddenly go in and and say: "What are you doing?" "I am reading." "What are you reading?" "A book." You look at the book; it is a bad book. "Where did you get it?" "I borrowed it." Alas, there are always those abroad who would like to loan your son or daughter a bad book. Everywhere, everywhere an unclean literature. I charge upon it the destruction of ten thousand immortal souls, and I bid you wake up to the magnitude of the theme. I shall take all the world's literature—good novels and bad, travels true and false, histories faithful and incorrect, legends beautiful and monstrous, all tracts, all chronicles, all epilogues, all family, city, State and national libraries—and pile them up in a pyramid of literature, and then I shall bring to bear upon it some grand, glorious, infallible, unmistakable Christian principles. God help me to write with reference to my last account. I charge you, in the first place, to stand aloof from all books that give false pictures of human life. Life is neither a tragedy nor a farce. Men are not all either knaves nor heroes. Women are neither angels nor furies. And yet, if you depended upon much of the literature of the day, you would get the idea that life, instead of being something earnest, something practical, is a fitful and fantastic and extravagant thing. How poorly prepared are that young man and woman for the duties of to-day who spent last night wading through brilliant passages descriptive of magnificent knavery and wickedness! The man will be looking all day long for his heroine, in the tin-shop, by the forge, in the factory, in the counting-room, and he will not find her, and he will be dissatisfied. A man who gives himself up to the indiscriminate reading of novels will be nerveless, inane, and a nuisance. He will be fit neither for the store, nor the shop, nor the field. A woman who gives herself up to the indiscriminate reading of novels will be unfitted for the duties of wife, mother, sister, daughter. There she is, hair disheveled, countenance vacant, cheeks pale, hands trembling, bursting into tears at midnight over the fate of some unfortunate lover; in the day time, when she ought to be busy, staring by the half hour at nothing; biting her finger nails into the quick. The carpet that was plain before will be plainer after having wandered through a romance all night long in tesselated halls of castles. And your industrious companion will be more unattractive than ever now that you have walked in the romance through parks with plumed princesses, or lounged in the arbor with the polished desperado. O, these confirmed novel readers! They are unfitted for this life, which is a tremendous discipline. They know not how to go through the furnaces of trial through which they must pass, and they are unfitted for a world where everything we gain we achieve by hard, long-continuing and exhaustive work.

Again, abstain from all those books which, while they have some good things about them, have also an admixture of evil. You have read books that had two elements in them—the good and the bad. Which stuck to you? The bad! The heart of most people is like a sieve, which lets the small particles of gold fall through, but keeps the great cinders. Once in awhile there is a mind like a loadstone, which, plunged amid steel and brass filings, gathers up the steel and repels the brass. But it is generally just the opposite. If you attempt to plunge through a fence of burrs to get one blackberry, you will get more burrs than blackberries. You can not afford to read a bad book, however good you are. You say: "The influence is insignificant." I tell you that the scratch of a pin has sometimes produced the lock-jaw. Alas, if through curiosity, as many do, you pry into an evil book, your curiosity is as dangerous as that of the man who would take a torch into a gunpowder mill merely to see whether it would really blow up or not.

In a menagerie, a man put his arm through the bars of a black leopard's cage. The animal's hide looked so sleek, and bright and beautiful. He just stroked it once. The monster seized him, and he drew forth a hand torn, and mangled, and bleeding. O, touch not evil even with the faintest stroke! Though it may be glossy and beautiful, touch it not, lest you pull forth your soul torn and bleeding under the clutch of the black leopard. "But," you say, "how can I find out whether a book is good or bad without reading it?" There is always something suspicious about a bad book. I never knew an exception—something suspicious in the index or style of illustration. This venomous reptile almost always carries a warning rattle. I charge you to stand off from all those books which corrupt the imagination and inflame the passions. I do not refer now to that kind of a book which the villain has under his coat waiting for the school to get out, and then, looking both ways to see that there is no policeman around the block, offers the book to your son on his way home. I do not speak of that kind of literature, but that which evades the law and comes out in polished style, and with acute plot sounds the tocsin that rouses up all the baser passions of the soul. To-day, under the nostrils of this land, there is a fetid, reeking, unwashed literature, enough to poison all the fountains of public virtue, and smite your sons and daughters as with the wing of a destroying angel, and it is time that the ministers of the gospel blew the trumpet and rallied the forces of righteousness, all armed to the teeth, in this great battle against a depraved literature. Again, abstain from those books which are apologetic of crime. It is a sad thing that some of the best and most beautiful book-binderies, and some of the finest rhetoric, have been brought to make sin attractive. Vice is a horrible thing, anyhow. It is born in shame, and dies howling in the darkness. In this world it is scourged with a whip of scorpions, but afterwards the thunders of God's wrath pursue it across a boundless desert, beating it with ruin and woe. When you come to paint carnality, do not paint it as looking from behind embroidered curtains, or through lattice of royal seraglio, but as writhing in the agonies of a city hospital.

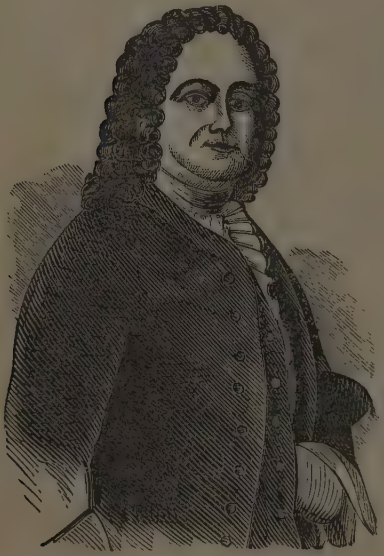
Cursed be the books that try to make impurity decent, and crime attractive, and hypocrisy noble! Cursed be the books that swarm with libertines and desperadoes, who make the brain of the young people whirl with villainy. Ye authors who write them, ye publishers who print them, ye booksellers who distribute them, shall be cut to pieces, if not by an aroused community, then, at last, by the hail of divine vengeance, which shall sweep to the lowest pit of perdition all ye murderers of souls. I tell you, though you may escape in this world, you will be ground at last under the hoof of eternal calamities, and you will be chained to the rock, and you will have the vultures of despair clawing at your soul, and those whom you have destroyed will come around to torment you, and to pour hotter coals of fury upon your head, and rejoice eternally in the outcry of your pain and the howl of your damnation.

The clock strikes midnight. A fair form bends over a romance. The eyes flash fire. The breath is quick and irregular. Occasionally the color dashes to the cheek, and then dies out. The hands tremble as though a guardian spirit were trying to shake the deadly book out of the grasp. Hot tears fall. She laughs with a shrill voice that drops dead at its own sound. The sweat on her brow is the spray dashed up from the river of death. The clock strikes four, and the rosy dawn soon after begins to look through the lattice upon the pale form that looks like a detained specter of the night. Soon in a mad-house she will mistake her ringlets for curling serpents, and thrust her white hand through the bars of the prison, and smite her head, rubbing it back as though to push the scalp from the skull, shrieking: "My brain! my brain!" Oh, stand off from that! Why will you go sounding your way amid the reefs and warning buoys, when there is such a vast ocean in which you may voyage, all sail set?

I consider the lascivious pictorial literature of the day as most tremendous for ruin. There is no one who can like good pictures better than I do. The quickest and most condensed way of impressing the public mind is by pictures.

What the painter does by his brush for a few favorites the engraver does by his knife for the million. What the author accomplishes by fifty pages the artist does by a flash. The best part of a painting that costs ten thousand dollars you may buy for ten cents. Fine paintings belong to the aristocracy of art. Engravings belong to the democracy of art. You do well to gather good pictures in your homes. Spread them before your children after the tea hour is past and the evening circle is gathered. Throw them on the invalid's couch. Strew them through the rail train to cheer the traveler on his journey. Tack them on the wall of the nursery. Gather them in albums and portfolios. God speed the good pictures on their way with ministries of knowledge and mercy. But what shall I say of the prostitution of this art to purposes of iniquity? These death-warrants of the soul are at every street corner. They smite the vision of the young man with pollution. Many a young man buying a copy has bought his eternal discomfiture. There may be enough poison in one bad picture to poison one soul, and that soul may poison ten, and ten fifty, and the fifty hundreds, and the hundreds thousands, until nothing but the measuring line of eternity can tell the height, and depth, and ghastilness, and horror of the great undoing. The work of death that the wicked author does in a whole book the bad engraver may do on a half side of a pictorial. Under the guise of pure mirth the young man buys one of these sheets. He unrolls it before his comrades amid roars of laughter, but long after the paper is gone the result may perhaps be seen in the blasted imagination of those who saw it. The queen of death holds a banquet every night, and these periodicals are the printed invitations to her guests. Alas, that the fair brow of American art should be blotched with this plague spot, and that philanthropists, bothering themselves about smaller evils, should lift up no united and vehement voice against this great calamity. Young man, buy not this moral strychnine for your soul. Pick not up this nest of coiled adders for your pocket. Patronize no news-stand that keeps them. Have your room bright with good engravings, but for these outrageous pictorials have not one wall, not one bureau, not one pocket. A man is no better than the pictures he loves to look at. If your eyes are not pure your heart can not be. At a news-stand one can guess the character of a man by the kind of pictorial he purchases. When the devil fails to get a man to read a bad book, he sometimes succeeds in getting him to look at a bad picture. When Satan goes a-fishing he does not care whether it is a long line or a short line, if he only draws his victim in. Beware of lascivious pictorials, young man, in the name of Almighty God I charge you.

If I have successfully laid down any principles by which you may judge in regard to books and newspapers, then I have done something of which I shall not be ashamed on the day which shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, IN HIS YOUTH.

Cherish good books and newspapers. Beware of the bad ones. One column may save your soul; one paragraph may ruin it. Benjamin Franklin said that the reading of Cotton Mather's essay on "Doing Good" molded his entire life. The assassin of Lord Russell declared that he was led into crime by reading one vivid romance. The consecrated John Angell James, than whom England never produced a better man, declared in his old days that he had never yet got over the evil effects of having for fifteen minutes once read a bad book. But I need not go so far off. I could come near home and tell you of something that occurred in my college days. I could tell you of a comrade that was great-hearted, noble and generous. He was studying for an honorable profession, but he had an infidel book in his trunk, and he said to me one day? "De Witt, would you like to read it?" I said: "Yes, I would." I took the book and read it only for a few minutes. I was really startled with what I saw there, and I handed the book back to him and said: "You had better destroy that book." No, he kept it. He read it. He re-read it. After awhile he gave up religion as a myth. He gave up God as a nonentity. He gave up the Bible as a fable. He gave up the Church of Christ as a useless institution. He gave up good morals as being unnecessarily stringent. I have heard of him but twice in many years. The time before the last I heard of him he was a confirmed inebriate. The last I heard of him he was coming out of an insane asylum—in body, mind and soul an awful wreck. I believe that one infidel book killed him for two worlds.

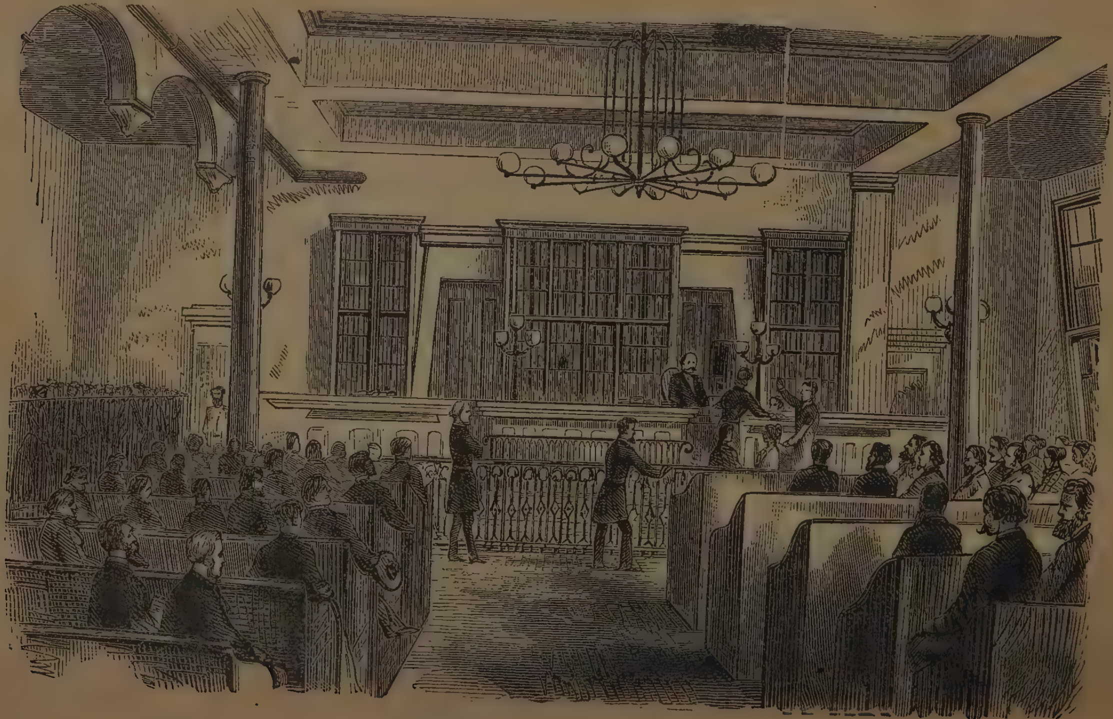
Look through your library, and then, having looked through your library, look on the stand where you keep your pictorials and newspapers, and apply the Christian principles I have laid down. If there is anything in your home that can not stand the test, do not give it away, for it might spoil an immortal soul; do not sell it, for the money you get would be the price of blood; but rather kindle a fire on your kitchen hearth, or in your back yard, and then drop the poison in it, and keep stirring the blaze until from preface to appendix there shall not be a single paragraph left, and the bonfire in your city shall be as consuming as that one in the streets of Ephesus.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOES OF SOCIETY.

By a homely but expressive figure, David sets forth the bad influences which in olden time broke in upon God's heritage, as with swine's foot trampling, and as with swine's snout uprooting the vineyards of prosperity. What was true then is true now. There have been enough trees of righteousness planted to overshadow the whole earth, had it not been for the axe-men who hewed them down. The temple of truth would long ago have been completed had it not been for the iconoclasts who defaced the walls and battered down the pillars. The whole earth would have been an Eshcol of ripened clusters had it not been that "the boar has wasted it and the wild beast of the field devoured it."

I propose to point out to you those whom I consider to be *the uprooting and devouring classes of society.* First, *the public criminals.* You ought not to be surprised that these people make up a large portion in many communities. The vast majority of the criminals who take ship from Europe come into our own port. In 1869, of the forty-nine thousand people who were incarcerated in the prisons of the country, thirty-two thousand were of foreign birth. Many of them were the very desperadoes of society, oozing into the slums of our cities, waiting for an opportunity to riot and steal and debauch, joining the large gang of American thugs and cut-throats. There are in this cluster of cities—New York, Jersey City and Brooklyn—four thousand people whose entire business in life is to commit crime. That is as much their business as jurisprudence or medicine or merchandise is your business. To it they bring all their energies



THE TOOMBS, NEW YORK CITY.

of body mind, and soul, and they look upon the interregnums which they spend in prison as so much unfortunate loss of time, just as you look upon an attack of influenza or rheumatism which fastens you in the house for a few days. It is their lifetime business to pick pockets, and blow up safes, and shoplift, and ply the panel game, and they have as much pride of skill in their business as you have in yours when you upset the argument of an opposing counsel, or cure a gun-shot fracture which other surgeons have given up, or foresee a turn in the market so you buy goods just before they go up twenty per cent. It is their business to commit crime, and I do not suppose that once in a year the thought of the immorality strikes them. Added to these professional criminals, American and foreign, there is a large class of men who are more or less industrious in crime. In one year the police in this cluster of cities arrested ten thousand people for theft, and ten thousand for assault and battery, and fifty thousand for intoxication. Drunkenness is responsible for much of the theft, since it confuses a man's ideas of property, and he gets his hands on things that do not belong to him. Rum is responsible for much of the assault and battery, inspiring men to sudden bravery, which they must demonstrate though it be on the face of the next gentleman.

Seven million of dollars' worth of property stolen in this cluster of cities in one year. You cannot, as good citizens, be independent of that fact. It will touch your pocket, since I have to give you the fact that these three cities pay seven million dollars' worth of taxes a year to arraign, try and support the criminal population. You help to pay the board of every criminal, from the sneak-thief that snatches a spool of cotton, up to some man who enacts a "Black Friday." More than that, it touches your heart in the moral depression of the community. You might as well think to stand in a closely confined room where there are fifty people and yet not breathe the vitiated air, as to stand in a community where there is such a great multitude of the depraved without somewhat being contaminated. What is the fire that burns your store down compared with the conflagration which consumes your morals? What is the theft of the gold and silver from your money safe compared with the theft of your children's virtue?

We are all ready to arraign criminals. We shout at the top of our voice, "Stop thief!" and when the police get on the track we come out, hatless and in our slippers, and assist in the arrest. We come around the bawling ruffian and hustle him off to justice, and when he gets in prison, what do we do for him? With great gusto we put on the handcuffs and the hopples; but what preparation are we making for the day when the handcuffs and hopples come off? Society seems to say to these criminals, "Villain, go in there and rot," when it ought to say, "You are an offender against the law, but we mean to give you an opportunity to repent; we mean to help you. Here are Bibles and tracts and Christian influences. Christ died for you. Look and live." Vast improvements have been made by introducing industry into the prison; but we want something more than hammers and shoe lasts to reclaim these people. Aye, we want more than sermons on the Sabbath day. Society must impress these men with the fact that it does not enjoy their suffering, and that it is attempting to reform and elevate them. The majority of criminals suppose that society has a grudge against them, and they in turn have a grudge against society.

They are harder in heart and more infuriate when they come out of jail than when they went in. Many of the people who go to prison go again and again and again. Some years ago, of fifteen hundred prisoners who during the year had been in Sing Sing, four hundred had been there before. In a house of correction in the country, where during a certain reach of time there had been five thousand people, more than three thousand had been there before. So, in one case the prison, and in the other case the house of correction left them just as bad as they were before. The secretary of one of the benevolent societies of New York saw a lad fifteen years of age who had spent three years of his life in prison, and he said to the lad, "What have they done for you to make you better?" "Well," replied the lad, "the first time I was brought up before the judge he said, 'You ought to be ashamed of yourself.' And then I committed a crime again, and I was brought up before the same judge, and he said, 'You rascal!' And after a while I committed some other crime, and I was brought before the same judge, and he said, 'You ought to be hanged.'" That is all they had done for him in the way of reformation and salvation. "Oh," you say, "these people are incorrigible." I suppose there are hundreds of persons this day lying in the prison bunks who would leap up at the prospect of reformation, if society would only allow them a way into decency and respectability. "O," you say, "I have no patience with these rogues." I ask you in reply, how much better would you have been under the same circumstances? Suppose your mother had been a blasphemer and your father a sot, and you had started life with a body stuffed with evil proclivities, and you had spent much of your time in a cellar amid obscenities and cursing, and if at ten years of age you had been compelled to go out and steal, battered and banged at night if you came in without any spoils, and suppose your early manhood and womanhood had been covered with rags and filth and decent society had turned its back upon you, and left you to consort with vagabonds and wharf-rats—how much better would you have been? I have no sympathy with that executive clemency which would let crime run loose, or which would sit in the gallery of a court-room weeping because some hard-hearted wretch is brought to justice; but I do say that the safety and life of the community demand more potential influences in behalf of political offenders.

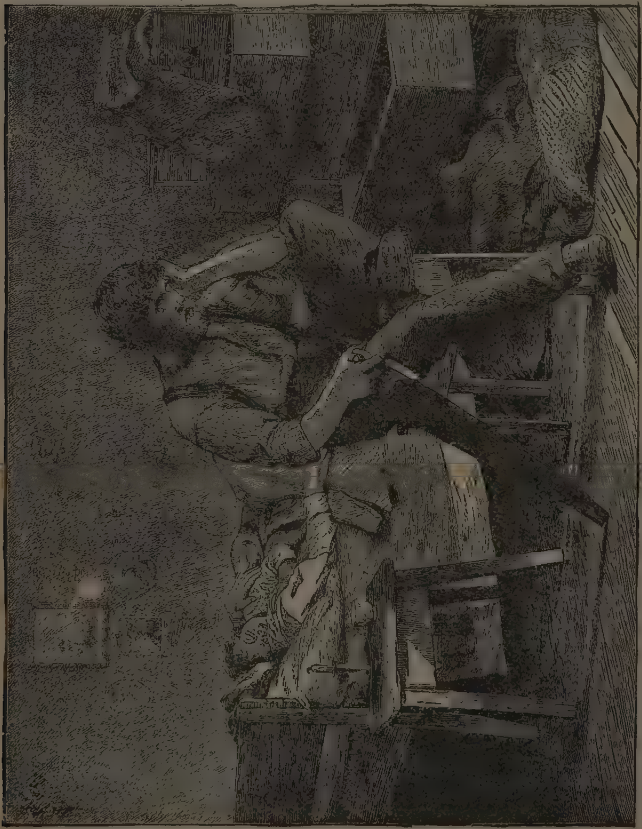
The Raymond street jail is enough to bring down the wrath of Almighty God on the city of Brooklyn. It would not be strange if the jail fever should start in that horrible hole, like that which raged in England during the session of the Black Assize, when three hundred perished—judges, jurors, constables and lawyers. Alas that our fair city should have such a pest-house. I understand the sheriff and jail-keeper do all they can, under the circumstances, for the comfort of these people; but five and six people are crowded into a place where there ought to be but one or two. The air is like that of the Black Hole of Calcutta. As the air swept through the wicket, it almost knocked me down. No sunlight. Young men who had committed their first crime crowded in among old offenders. I saw there one woman, with a child almost blind, who had been arrested for the crime of poverty, who was waiting until the slow law could take her to the almshouse, where she rightfully belonged; but she was thrust in there with her child amid the most abandoned wretches of the town. Many of the offenders in that prison sleeping on the floor with nothing but a vermin-covered blanket over them. Those people crowded and wan and wasted and half suffocated and infuriated. I said to the men, "How do you stand it here?" "God knows," said one man, "we have to stand it." O, they will pay you when they get out. Where they burned down one house they will burn three. They will strike deeper the assassin's knife. They are this minute plotting worse burglaries. Raymond street jail is the best place I know of to manufacture foot-pads, vagabonds and cut-throats. Yale College is not so well calculated to make scholars, nor Harvard so well calculated to make scientists, nor Princeton so well calculated to make theologians, as Raymond street jail is calculated to make criminals. All that these men do not know of crime after they have been in that dungeon for some time, Satanic machination cannot teach them. Every hour that jail stands, it challenges the Lord Almighty to smite this city. I call upon the people to rise in their wrath and demand a reformation. I call upon the judges of our courts to expose that infamy. I call upon the Legislature of the State of New York, now in session, to examine and appease that outrage on God and human society. I demand, in behalf of those incarcerated prisoners, fresh air and clear sunlight, and, in the name of Him who had not where to lay His head, a couch to rest on at night. In the insufferable stench and sickening surroundings of that Raymond street jail there is nothing but disease for the body, idiocy for the mind, and death for the soul. Stifled air and darkness and vermin never turned a thief into an honest man.

We want men like John Howard and Sir William Blackstone, and women like Elizabeth Fry, to do for the prisons of the United States what those people did in other days for the prisons of England. I thank God for what Isaac T. Hopper and Doctor Wines and Mr. Harris and scores of others have done in the way of prison reform; but we want something more radical before upon this city will come the blessing of Him who said: "I was in prison and ye came unto me."

In this class of uprooting and devouring population are *untrustworthy officials*. "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy kings, and child, and thy princes drink in the morning." It is a great calamity to a city when bad men get into public authority. Why was it that in New York there was such unparalleled crime between 1866 and 1871! It was because the judges of police in that city, for the most part, were as corrupt as the vagabonds that came before them for trial. Those were the days of high carnival for election frauds, assassination, and forgery. We had the "Whiskey Ring," and the "Tammany Ring," and the "Erie Ring." There was one man during those years that got one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars in one year for serving the public. In a few years it was estimated that there were fifty millions of public treasure squandered. In those times the criminal had only to wink to the judge, or his lawyer would wink for him, and the question was decided for the defendant. Of the eight thousand people arrested in that city in one year, only three thousand were punished. These little matters were "fixed up," while the interests of society were "fixed down." You know as well as I that a criminal who escapes only opens the door for other criminalities. When the two pickpockets snatched the diamond pin from the Brooklyn gentleman in a Broadway stage, and the villains were arrested, and the trial was set down for the General Sessions, and then the trial never came, and never anything more was heard of the case, the public officials were only bidding higher for more crime. It is no compliment to public authority when we have in all the cities of the country, walking abroad, men and women notorious for criminality, unwhipped of justice. They are pointed out to you in the street day by day. There you find what are called the "fences," the men who stand between the thief and the honest man, sheltering the thief and at great price handing over the goods to the owner to whom they belong. There you will find those who are called the "skinners," the men who hover around Wall street, with great sleight of hand in bonds and stocks.

There you find the funeral thieves, the people who go and sit down and mourn with families and pick their pockets. And there you find the "confidence men," who borrow money of you because they have a dead child in the house and want to bury it, when they never had a house nor a family; or they want to go to England and get a large property there, and they want you to pay their way, and they will send the money back by the very next mail. There are the "harbor thieves," the "shoplifters," the "pickpockets," famous all over the cities. Hundreds of them with their faces in the " Rogues' Gallery," yet doing nothing for the last five or ten years but defraud society and escape justice. When these people go unarrested and unpunished, it is putting a high premium upon vice, and saying to the young criminals of this country, " What a safe thing it is to be a great criminal." Let the law swoop upon them. Let it be known in this country that crime will have no quarter, that the detectives are after it, that the police club is being brandished, that the iron door of the prison is being opened, that the judge is ready to call on the case. Too great leniency to criminals is too great severity to society. When the President pardoned the wholesale dealer in obscene books he hindered the crusade against licentiousness; but when Governor Dix refused to let go Foster the assassin, who was condemned to the gallows, he grandly vindicated the laws of God and the dignity of the State of New York.

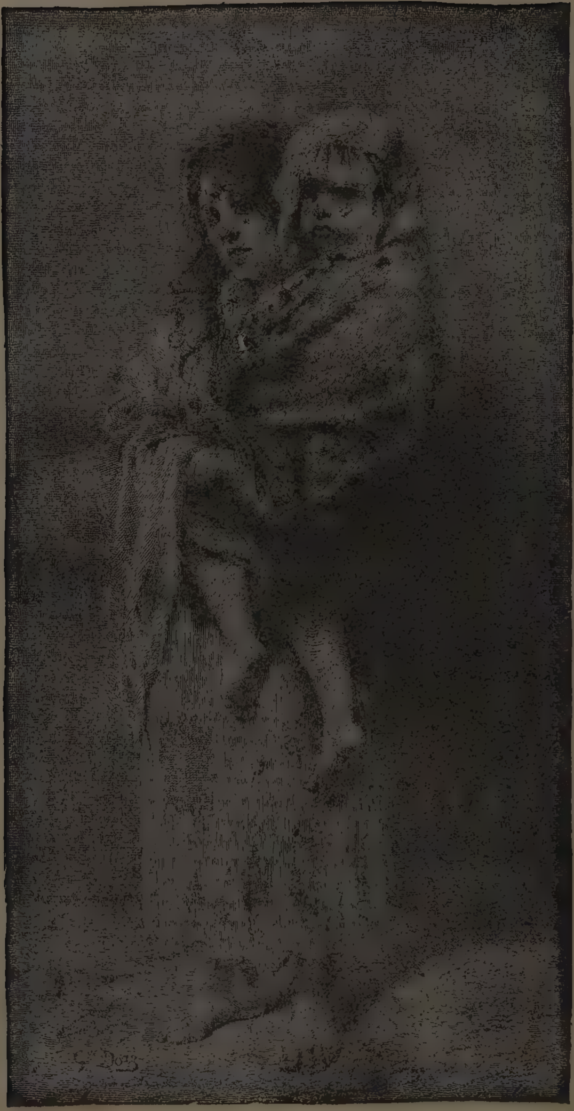
Among the uprooting and devouring classes in our midst are *the idle.* Of course, I do not refer to the people who are getting old, or to the sick, or to those who cannot get work; but I tell you to look out for those athletic men and women who will not work. When the French nobleman was asked why he kept busy when he had so large a property, he said, "I keep on engraving so I may not hang myself." I do not care who the man is, he cannot afford to be idle. It is from the idle classes that the criminal classes are made up. Character, like water, gets putrid if it stands still too long. Who can wonder that in this world, where there is so much to do, and all the hosts of earth and heaven and hell are plunging into the conflict, and angels are flying, and God is at work, and the universe is a-quake with the marching and counter marching, that God lets His indignation fall upon a man who chooses idleness? I have watched these do-nothings who spend their time stroking their beard, and retouching their toilette, and criticising industrious people, and pass their days and nights in bar-rooms and club-houses, lounging and smoking and chewing and card-playing. They are not only useless, but they are dangerous. How hard it is for them to while away the hours.



OUT OF WORK.—PAGE 191.

Alas! For them, if they do not know how to while away an hour, what will they do when they have all eternity on their hands? These men for a while smoke the best cigars, and wear the best broadcloth, and move in the highest spheres; but I have noticed that very soon they come down to the prison, the almshouse, or stop at the gallows.

The police stations of this cluster of cities furnish annually two hundred thousand lodgings. For the most part, these two hundred thousand lodgings are furnished to able-bodied men and women—people as able to work as you and I are. When they are received no longer at one police station, because they are "repeaters," they go to some other station, and so they keep moving around. They get their food at house doors, stealing what they can lay their hands on in the front basement while the servant is spreading the bread in the back basement. They will not work. Time and again, in the country districts, they have wanted hundreds and thousands of laborers. These men will not go. They do not want to work. I have tried them. I have set them to sawing wood in my cellar, to see whether they wanted to work. I offered to pay them well for it. I have heard the saw going for about three minutes, and then I went down, and lo, the wood, but no saw! They are the pest of society, and they stand in the way of the Lord's poor, who ought to be helped, and will be helped. While there are thousands of industrious men who cannot get any work, these men who do not want any work come in and make that plea. I am in favor of the restoration of the old-fashioned whipping-post for just this one class of men who will not work; sleeping at night at public expense in the station house; during the day, getting their food at your doorstep. Imprisonment does not scare them. They would like it. Blackwell's Island or Sing Sing would be a comfortable home for them. They would have no objection to the almshouse, for they like thin soup, if they cannot get mock-turtle. I propose this for them: on one side of them put some healthy work; on the other side put a raw hide, and let them take their choice. I like for that class of people the scant bill of fare that Paul wrote out for the Thessalonian loafers: "If any work not, neither

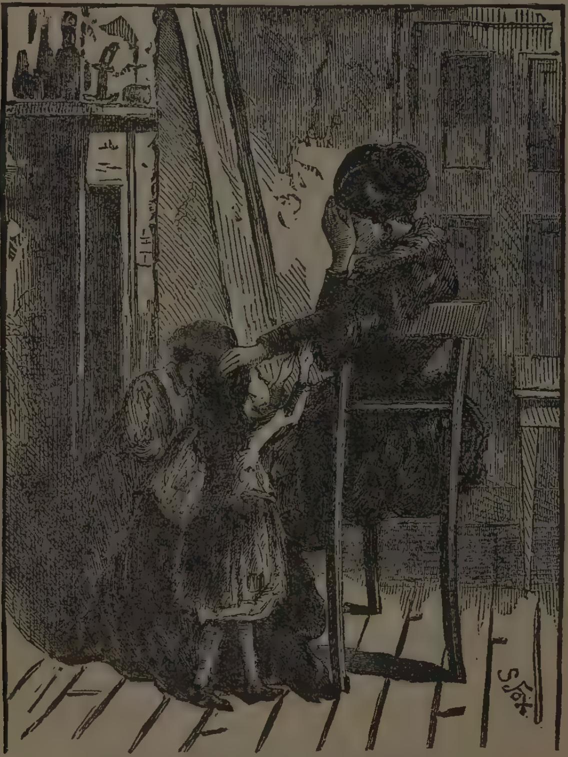


THE LORD'S POOR.

should he eat." By what law of God or man is it right that you and I should toil day in and day out, until our hands are blistered and our arms ache and our brain gets numb, and then be called upon to support what in the United States are about two million loafers! They are a very dangerous class. Let the public authorities keep their eyes on them.

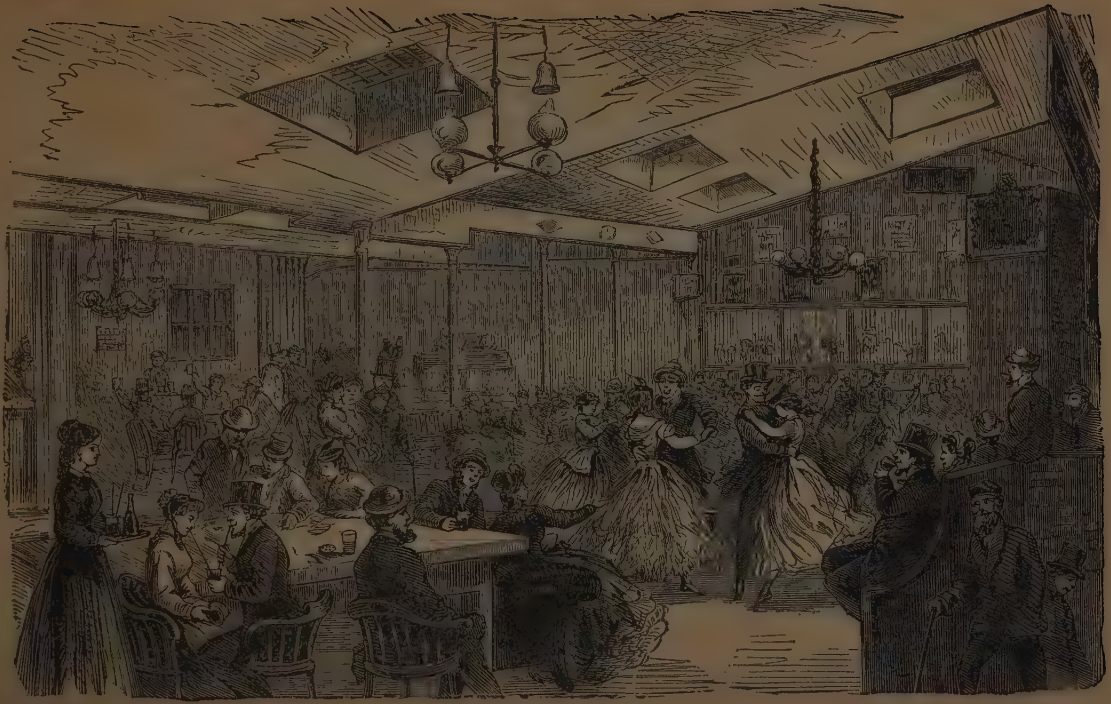
Among the uprooting classes I place *the oppressed poor*. Poverty to a certain extent is chastening; but after that, when it drives a man to the wall, and he hears his children cry in vain for bread, it sometimes makes him desperate. I think that there are thousands of honest men lacerated into vagabondism. There are men crushed under burdens for which they are not half paid. While there is no excuse for criminality, even in oppression, I state it as a simple fact that much of the scoundrelism of the community is consequent upon ill-treatment. There are many men and women battered and bruised and stung until the hour of despair has come, and they stand with the ferocity of a wild beast which, pursued until it can run no longer, turns round, foaming and bleeding, to fight the hounds.

There is a vast underground city life that is appalling and shameful. It wallows and steams with putrefaction. You go down the stairs, which are wet and decayed with filth, and at the bottom you find the poor victims on the floor, cold, sick, three-fourths dead, slinking into a still darker corner under the gleam of the lantern of the police. There has not been a breath of fresh air in that room for five years, literally. The broken sewer empties its contents upon them, and they lie at night in the swimming filth. There they are, men, women, children; blacks, whites; Mary Magdalen without her repentance, and Lazarus without his God! These are the "dives" into which the pickpockets and the thieves go, as well as a great many who would like a different life but cannot get it. These places are the sores of the city, which bleed perpetual corruption. They are the underlying volcano that threatens us with a Caraccas earthquake. It rolls and roars and surges and heaves and rocks and blasphemes and dies. And there are only two outlets for it: the police court and the Potter's Field. In other words, they must either go to prison or to hell. O, you never saw it, you say. You never will see it until on the day when these staggering wretches shall come up in the light of the judgment throne, and while all hearts are being revealed God will ask you what you did to help them.



MY CHILDREN BEGGING FOR BREAD.

There is another layer of poverty and destitution, not so



THE DANCE HALL.

squalid, but almost as helpless. You hear the incessant wailing for bread and clothes and fire. Their eyes are sunken. Their cheek-bones stand out. Their hands are damp with slow consumption. Their flesh is puffed up with dropsies. Their breath is like that of a charnel-house. They hear the roar of the wheels of fashion over head, and the gay laughter of men and maidens, and wonder why God gave to others so much and to them so little. Some of them thrust into an infidelity like that of the poor German girl who, when told in the midst of her wretchedness that God was good, she said: "No, no good God. Just look at me. No good God."

In this cluster of cities, whose cry of want I interpret, there are said to be, as far as I can figure it up from the reports, about two hundred and ninety thousand honest poor who are dependent upon individual, city and State charities. If all their voices could come up at once, it would be a groan that would shake the foundations of the city, and bring all earth and heaven to the rescue. But, for the most part, it suffers unexpressed. It sits in silence, gnashing its teeth, and sucking the blood of its own arteries, waiting for the judgment day. O, I should not wonder if on that day it would be found out that some of us had some things that belonged to them; some extra garment which might have made them comfortable in these cold days; some bread thrust into the ash-barrel that might have appeased their hunger for a little while; some wasted candle or gas-jet that might have kindled up their darkness; some fresco on the ceiling that would have given them a roof; some jewel which, brought to that orphan girl in time, might have kept her from being crowded off the precipices of an unclean life; some New Testament that would have told them of Him who "came to seek and save that which was lost." O, this wave of vagrancy and hunger and nakedness that dashes against our front door-step; I wonder if you hear it and see it as much as I hear it and see it. I have been almost frenzied with the perpetual cry for help from all classes and from all nations, knocking, knocking, ringing, ringing, until I dare not have more than one decent pair of shoes, nor more than one decent coat, nor more than one decent hat, lest in the last day it be found that I have something that belongs to them, and Christ shall turn to me and say: "Inasmuch as ye did it *not* to these, ye did it *not* to Me." If the roofs of all the houses of destitution could be lifted so we could look down into them just as God looks, whose nerves would be strong enough to stand it? And yet there they are. The forty-five thousand sewing-women in these three cities, some of them in hunger and cold, working night after night, until sometimes the blood spurts from nostril and lip. How well their grief was voiced by that despairing woman who stood by her invalid husband and invalid child, and said to the city missionary: "I am down-hearted. Everything's against us; and then there are other things." "What other things?" said the city missionary. "O," she replied, "my sin." "What do you mean by that?" "Well," she said, "I never hear or see anything good. It's work from Monday morning to Saturday night, and then when Sunday comes I can't go out, and I walk the floor, and it makes me tremble to think that I have got to meet God. O, sir, it's so hard for us. We have to work so, and then we have so much trouble, and then we are getting along so poorly; and see this wee little thing growing weaker and weaker; and then to think we are getting no nearer to God, but floating away from Him. O, sir, I do wish I was ready to die."

I should not wonder if they had a good deal better time than we in the future, to make up for the fact that they had such a bad time here. It would be just like Jesus to say: "Come up and take the highest seats. You suffered with Me on earth; now be glorified with me in heaven." O thou weeping One of Bethany! O thou dying One of the cross! Have mercy on the starving, freezing, homeless poor of these great cities!

I want you to know who are the up-rooting classes of society. I want you to be more discriminating in your charities. I want your hearts open with generosity, and your hands open with charity. I want you to be made the sworn friends of all city evangelization, and all newsboys' lodging houses, and all Children's Aid Societies. Aye, I want you to send the Dorcas Society all the cast-off clothing, that, under the skillful manipulation of our wives and mothers and sisters and daughters, these garments may be fitted on the cold, bare feet, and on the shivering limbs of the destitute. I should not wonder if that hat that you give should come back a jeweled coronet, or if that garment that you this week hand out from your wardrobe should mysteriously be whitened, and somehow wrought into the Saviour's own robe, so in the last day He would run His hand over it, and say: "I was naked, and ye clothed Me." That would be putting your garments to glorious uses.

I think in the contrast you will see how very kindly God has dealt with you in your comfortable homes, at your well-filled tables, and at the warm registers, look at the round faces of your children, and then at the review of God's goodness to you, and then go to your room and lock the door, and kneel down and say: "O Lord, I have been an ingrate; make me Thy child. O Lord, there are so many hungry and unclad and unsheltered to-day, I thank Thee that all my life Thou hast taken such good care of me. O Lord, there are so many sick and crippled children to-day, I thank Thee mine are well, some of them on earth, some of them in heaven. Thy goodness, O Lord, breaks me down. Take me once and forever. Sprinkled as I was many years ago at the altar, while my mother held me, now I consecrate my soul to Thee in a holier baptism of repenting tears.

" 'For sinners, Lord, Thou cam'st to bleed,
And I'm a sinner vile indeed;
Lord, I believe Thy grace is free,
O magnify that grace in me.' "

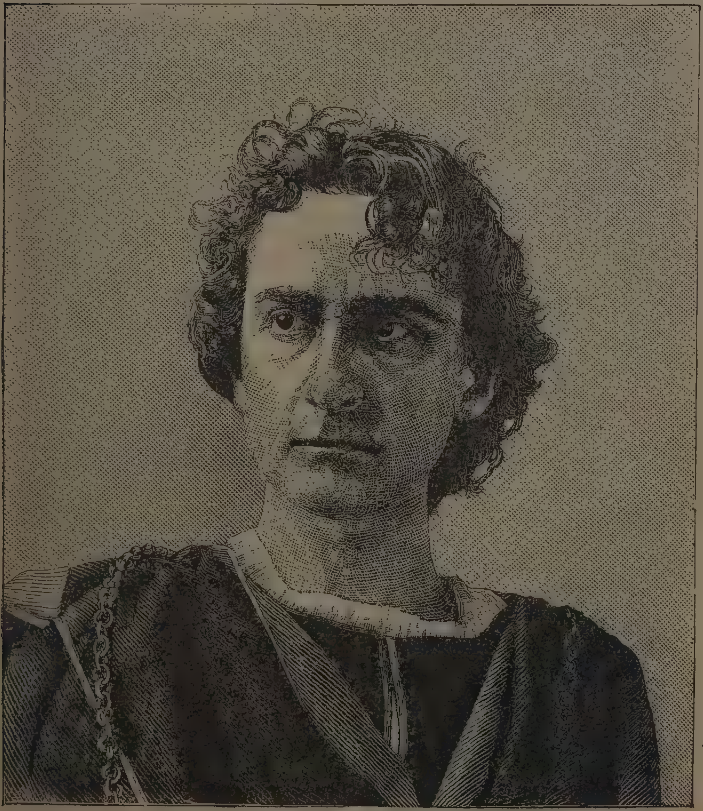
CHAPTER XIV.

THE THEATER.

Since the armies of civilization and Christianity started on their march, they have not fallen back an inch. There have been regiments cowardly, which have retreated and surrendered to the enemy, just as in all armies there are those unworthy the standard they carry; but the great host of God has been answering to the command given at the start of, "Forward, march!"

Have the entertainments and recreations of the world kept abreast in this grand march of the ages? Are the novels of our day superior to those that are past? Is the dance of this decade an improvement upon the dance of other decades? Are the opera houses rendering grander music than that which they rendered in other times? Are parlor games more healthful than they used to be? Are the theaters advancing in moral tone? Mark you, I am not to discuss whether the theater is right or wrong. I am not to make wholesale attack upon tragedians and comedians. There are a hundred questions in regard to the theater that might be asked which I shall not answer, the most of them having been answered at some other time by me. You say that Henry Irving and Edwin Booth and Joseph Jefferson are great actors, and are honorable men. I believe it. The question that I am to discuss is: Are theaters advancing in high moral tone?

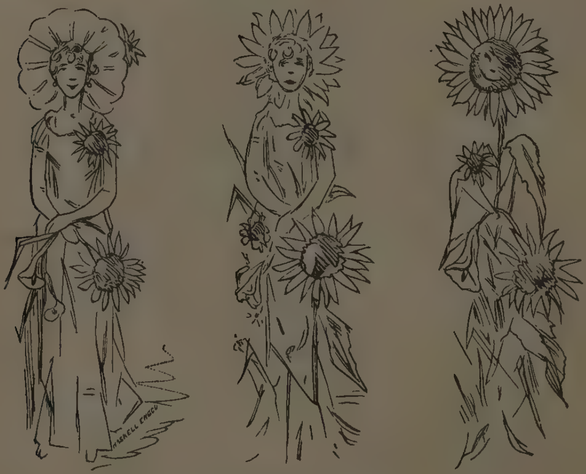
There are three or four reasons for answering this question in the negative, and the first is the combined and universal testimony of all the secular newspapers of the land that are worth anything. There is not a secular newspaper of any power in the United States which has not within the past few years, both in editorial and reportorial column, reprehended the styles of play most frequent. It is contrary to the financial interests of the secular newspaper severely to criticise the playhouse, because from it comes the largest advertising patronage, larger than from any other



EDWIN BOOTH.

source, thousands and tens of thousands of dollars a year. When, therefore, the secular newspapers of the land, contrary to their financial interests, severely criticise the playhouse for imbecile and impure spectacular, their testimony is to me conclusive. On the negative side of this question I roll up all the respectable printing-presses of America.

Another reason for answering this question in the negative is the depraved advertisements on the bulletin boards and on the board fences and in the show windows, from ocean to ocean. I take it for granted that those advertisements are honest, and that night by night are depicted the scenes there advertised. Are those the scenes to which parents take their sons and daughters, and young men their affianced? Would you allow in your parlor such brazen indecency enacted as is dramatized every night in some of the theaters of America, unless their advertisements be a libel? If the pictures be genuine, the scenes are damnable.



THE ÆSTHETIC DRAMA.

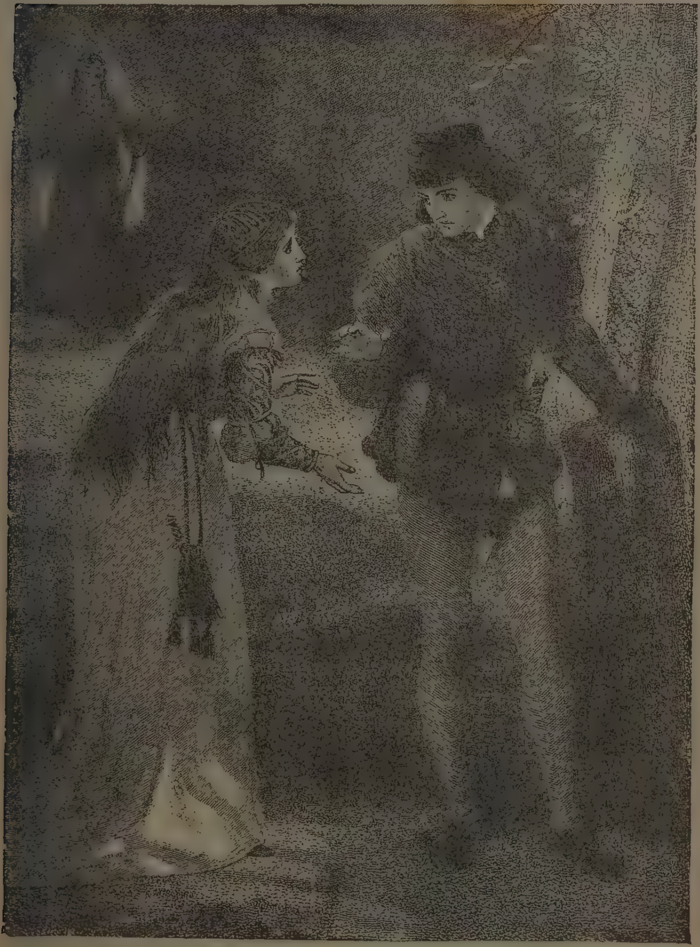
That which is wrong in a parlor is wrong on a stage. It ought to require just as much completeness of apparel to be honorable in one place as to be honorable in another. If fathers and mothers take their sons and daughters to see such Sodomite lack of robe, and then, in after time, the plowshare of libertinism and profligacy should go through their own household, they will get what they deserve. It seems as if, having obtained a surplus of sanctity during the Lenten services, right after Easter, all through the United States, the streets become a picture gallery which rival the museums of Pompeii, which are kept under lock and key. Where are the mayors of the cities, and the judges of the courts, and the police, that they allow such things? When our cities are blotched with these depraved advertisements is it not some reason why we should think that the theaters of this country are not very rapidly advancing toward millennial excellence?

Another reason for answering this question in the negative is the large importation of bad morals from foreign countries to the American stage. France sent one of her queens of the stage to this country, her infamy, instead of a shame, a boast. Never more a popular actress on the American stage, and never one more dissolute. Thousands and tens of thousands of professed Christian men and women went and burned incense before that goddess of debauchery. England, too, has sent her delectable specimens of ineffable sweetness commended by foreign princes, not as good as their mother. When I take into consideration this large importation of bad morals from foreign ports, I come to the conclusion that the American theaters are not, as a general thing, advancing in moral tone.

Another reason for answering this question in the negative is the fact that the vast majority of the plays of the day are degenerate. I will not name many of them, because I might advertise that which I condemn, and the mere mention of them would be a perfidy. If I mention any they must be those that are a little past, but which may come back again when the American taste wants a change of carrion. Take the plays of the last fifteen years, and I will admit that one-tenth of them are unobjectionable, but the nine-tenths of them are unfit to be looked at by the families of America. Subtract from them the libertinism and the domestic intrigue and the innuendo and the vulgarity and marital scandalism, and you would leave those plays powerless in the dramatic market.

Put side by side the plays of the time of Macready and the elder Booth and the modern plays, and you will find there has been an awful decadence. I have not seen those plays, but I have taken the testimony of authentic witnesses, and I have seen the skillful analyses by critics—a score of critics—among them such men as Dr. Buckley, of New York, men who have read scores of the plays and who can report in regard to them—I take the testimony of those who witnessed the plays and then I take the testimony of the critics who like the theater and who do not like it, I put them all together, and I find a moral decadence.

If you who took your families to see East Lynne will now in your cooler moments read the manuscript of that play—read the printed play, and go through the fetid and malodorous chapters in which dishonest womanhood is chased from iniquity to iniquity, you will be able to judge for yourself whether that is an improved drama. You might as well go into the grog-shop of the village hotel and sit down among the bevy of village loafers expecting to get any moral elevation as to get any moral elevation from a play like the "Ticket of Leave Man," full of villainous pictures and low slang. The play entitled "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" is a eulogy, a practical eulogy on deception practised on the bad, and men and women never come from seeing that play as pure as when they went in. "She Stoops to Conquer" is as full of moral miasma as the Roman Campagna is full of



FERDINAND AND MIRANDA.—TEMPEST. ACT. III, SCENE I.

typhus fever on a summer night. You may write Oliver

Goldsmith above it and beneath it and at the close of each act, but you can not cover up the profane and the salacious. The "School for Scandal" is rotten clear through with lasciviousness, and if a man should come into your house and take that play from under his arm and read it to your family, all the bones that were left in his body unbroken would not be worth mentioning.

But who could mention all the Don Cæsars, and the barmaids, and the Peg Woffingtons, and the Courtleighs, and the Lady Gay Spankers, and the poltroons, and the scapegraces, and the people minus all excellency plus all abomination, who gather men, women, boys, and girls by tens of thousands every night in the lazaretto of the average American theater. It is estimated that there are one thousand boys in Brooklyn every night breathing that pestilence. Hear it, ye whose sons stay out until 11 o'clock at night and you do not know where they are! Hear it, ye philanthropists who want this generation better than the generations that have gone by!

Once in a while a great tragedian will render King Lear or Merchant of Venice or Hamlet before entranced audiences, but those plays as compared with the imbecile and depraved plays on the American stage to-day are as the few drops of pure blood to the bad blood in a man who has passed out from yellow fever into Asiatic cholera and is now winding up with first-class small-pox. Now, I say the majority of the plays of this country being bad in their influence, I have a right to conclude that the theaters of America, take them as an average, are not coming to any very large moral improvement.

Now, I demand that as men and women who love the best interests of society that we band together to snatch the drama from its debased surroundings. I demand that as philanthropists and Christians we rescue the drama.

The drama is not the theater. The theater is a human institution. The drama is a literary expression of something

PORTIA AND SHYLOCK.—MERCHANT OF VENICE. ACT. IV. SCENE I.

which God implanted in nearly all of our souls. People talk as though it were something built up entirely outside of us by the Congreves and the Sheridans and the Shakespeares of literature. Oh! no. It is an echo of something divinely put within us. You see it in your little child three or four years of age with the dolls and the cradles and the carts. You see it ten years after in the parlor charades. You see it after in the impersonations at the Academy of Music. You see it on Thanksgiving Day, when we decorate the house of God with the fruits and harvests of the earth, that spectacular arousing our gratitude. We see it on Easter morn, when we spell out on the walls of the house of God in flowers the words: "He is risen," that spectacular arousing our emotion. Every parent likes it, and demonstrates it when he goes to see the school exhibition with its dialogues and its droll costumes. It is evidenced in the torchlight procession amid great political excitement, that torchlight procession only a dramatization of the political principles proclaimed.

Dithyrambic drama, romantic drama, sentimental drama, all an echo of the human soul. Farquhar and Congreve put in English literature only that which was in the English heart. Thespis and Eschylus dramatized only that which was in the Greek heart; Seneca and Plautus dramatized only that which was in the Roman heart; Racine and Alfieri dramatized only that which was in the French and the Italian heart; Shakespeare dramatized only that which was in the world's heart. But this divine principle is not to be despoiled and dragged into the service of sin. It is our business to rescue it, to lift it up, to bring it back, to exalt it. Will you suppress it? You might as well try to suppress its Creator. Just as we cultivate the beautiful and the sublime in taste by bird-haunted glen and roystering stream and cascade let down over moss-covered rocks, and the day setting up its banners of victory in the east, and passing out the gates of the west, setting everything on fire, the Austerlitz and the Waterloo of a July thunder-storm blazing its batteries into a sultry afternoon, and the round tear of the world wet on the cheek of the night—as by these things we try to culture a taste for the sublime and the beautiful, so we are to culture this dramatic taste by staccato passages in literature, by antithesis and synthesis, by all tragic passages in human life.

We are to take this dramatic element and we are to harness it for God. Because it has been taken into the service of sin is nothing against it. You might as well denounce music because in Corinth and Herculaneum it was used to demonstrate and set forth depravity and turpitude. Shall we not enthrone music on the organ because music again and again has been trampled under the foot of impious dance? Because there are pollutions in art shall we turn back upon Church's "Niagara," or Powers' "Greek Slave," or Rubens' "Descent from the Cross," or Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment?" Because these things have been dragged into the service of sin is the very reason that you and I should take the drama out and harness it for God and the truth. You Sabbath-school teachers want more of the dramatic element in your work, in your recital of the Bible scene, in the anecdote that you tell, in the descriptive gesture, in the impersonation of the character you present—you want more of the dramatic element. I can tell in looking over an audience of Sabbath-school children in which teacher the dramatic element is dominant, and in which the didactic element is dominant.

Oh, there are hundreds of people who are trying to do good. Have less of the didactic element, and have more of the dramatic. The tendency in our time is to drone religion, to moan religion, to croak religion, to supulcherize religion, when it ought to be put in an animated and spectacular manner.

I say to all those young men who are preparing for the Gospel ministry, go to your libraries and you will find that those who bring most souls to God, bring most into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, are dramatic. We want in all our work to freshen up. We want to freshen up, you in your sphere and I in mine. Great discussions in religious newspapers about why people do not come to church. I will tell you. You cannot take the old hackneyed phrases that have come snoring down through the centuries and arrest the attention of the masses. People in religious work do not want the sham flowers bought in a millinery shop, but the japonicas wet with the morning dew. They do not want the bones of the extinct megatherium of the past, but the living reindeer caught last August at the edge of Schroon Lake. We need, all of us, to drive out of our religious work the drowsy and the tedious and the didactic, and bring in the brightness and the vivacity and the holy sarcasm and the sanctified wit and epigrammatic power, and the blood-red earnestness, and we will get it through the sanctified drama.

But let me say to young men, do not let your fondness for the dramatic lead you into sin. While God has given you this faculty, cultivate it, and cultivate it in the right direction. Admire it when it is used for God. Abhor it when it is used for sin. We do not try to suppress it in you. Do not misrepresent us. We would have it directed; we would have it harnessed for multiplicand usefulness. In nowise suppress it. Gather all your faculties, and this among the others, and consecrate them to the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XV.

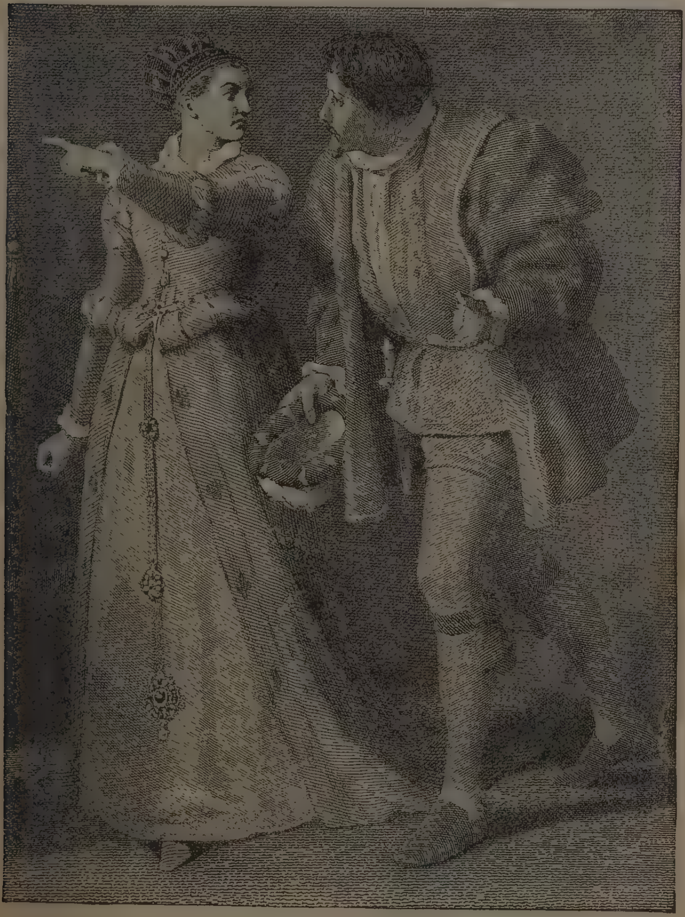
RIGHT AND WRONG AMUSEMENTS.

I wish to to draw the line between right and wrong amusements. Indeed, it is a line drawn by the hand of God, and reaching from eternity to eternity. On one side of the line it is all right, and on the other side of the line it is all wrong. I have been arguing against the monster of iniquity, the average American theater, as it was and is. I pass on to lay down certain principles by which you may judge in regard to any amusement or recreation, finding out for yourself whether it is right or whether it is wrong.

I remark, in the first place, that you can judge of the moral character of any amusement by its healthful result, or by its baleful reaction. There are people who seem made up of hard facts. They are a combination of multiplication tables and statistics. If you show them an exquisite picture, they will begin to discuss the pigments involved in the coloring. If you show them a beautiful rose, they will submit it to a botanical analysis, which is only the *post mortem* examination of a flower. They have no rebound in their nature. They never do anything more than smile. There are no great tides of feeling surging up from the depths of their soul, in billow after billow of reverberating laughter. They seems as if nature had built them by contract, and made a bungling job out of it. But, blessed be God, there are people in the world who have bright faces, and whose life is a song, an anthem, a pæan of victory. Even their troubles are like the vines that crawl up the side of a great tower, on the top of which the sunlight sits, and the soft airs of summer hold perpetual carnival. They are the people you like to have come to your house; they are the people I like to have come to my house. If you but touch the hem of their garments, you are healed.

Now, it is these exhilarant and sympathetic and warm-hearted people that are the most tempted to pernicious amusements. In proportion as a ship is swift, it wants a strong helmsman; in proportion as a horse is gay, it wants a stout driver; and these people of exuberant nature will do well to look at the reaction of all their amusements. If an amusement sends you home at night nervous, so that you can not sleep, and you rise up in the morning, not because you are slept out, but because your duty drags you from your slumbers, you have been where you ought not to have been. There are amusements that send a man next day to his work bloodshot, yawning, stupid, nauseated; and they are wrong kinds of amusement. There are entertainments that give a man disgust with the drudgery of life, with tools because they are not swords, with working aprons because they are not robes, with cattle because they are not infuriated bulls of the arena. If any amusement send you home longing for a life of romance and thrilling adventure, love that takes poison and shoots itself, moonlight adventures and hair-breadth escapes, you may depend upon it that you are the sacrificed victim of unsanctified pleasure. Our recreations are intended to build us up; and if they pull us down as to our moral or as to our physical strength, you may come to the conclusion that they are in the class spoken of as obnoxious.

Still further: those amusements are wrong which lead you into expenditure beyond your means. Money spent in recreation is not thrown away. It is all folly for us to come from a place of amusement feeling that we have wasted our money and time. You may by it have made an investment worth more than the transaction that yielded you a hundred or a thousand dollars. But how many properties have been riddled by costly amusements? The table has been robbed



BENEDICK AND BEATRICE.—MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. ACT IV. SCENE I.

to pay the club. The champagne has cheated the children's wardrobe. The carousing party has burned up the boy's primer. The table-cloth of the corner saloon is in debt to the wife's faded dress. Excursions that in a day make a tour around a whole month's wages; ladies whose lifetime business it is to "go shopping;" bets on horses and a box at the theater have their counterparts in uneducated children, bankruptcies that shock the money market and appall the Church, and that send drunkenness staggering across the richly figured carpet of the mansion, and dashing into the mirror, and drowning out the carol of music with the whooping of bloated sons come home to break their old mother's heart.

I saw a beautiful home, where the bell rang violently late at night. The son had been off in sinful indulgences. His comrades were bringing him home. They carried him to the door. They rang the bell at one o'clock in the morning. Father and mother came down. They were waiting for the wandering son, and then the comrades, as soon as the door was opened, threw the prodigal headlong into door-way, crying: "There he is, drunk as a fool. Ha, ha!" When men go into amusements that they can not afford, they first borrow what they can not earn, and then they steal what they can not borrow. First, they go into embarrassment, and then into lying, and then into theft; and when a man gets as far on as that, he does not stop short of the penitentiary. There is not a prison in the land where there are not victims of unsanctified amusements.

How often I have had parents come to me and ask me to go and beg their boy off from crimes that he had committed against his employer—the taking of funds out of the employer's till, or the disarrangements of the accounts. Why, he had salary enough to pay all lawful expenditure, but not enough salary to meet his sinful amusements. And again and again I have gone and implored for the young man, sometimes, alas! the petition all unavailing. Merchant, is there a disarrangement in your accounts? Is there a leakage in your money-drawer? Did not the cash account come out right last night? I will tell you. There is a young man in your store wandering off into bad amusements. The salary you give him may meet lawful expenditures, but not the sinful indulgences in which he has entered, and he takes by theft that which you do not give him in lawful salary.

How brightly the path of unrestrained amusement opens. The young man says: "Now I am off for a good time. Never mind economy. I'll get money somehow. What splendid acting in this theater to-night! What a fine road! What a beautiful day for a ride! Crack the whip and over the turnpike! Come, boys, fill high your glasses! Drink! Long life, health, plenty of rides just like this!" Hard-working men hear the clatter of the hoofs, and look up, and say: "Why, I wonder where those fellows get their money from. We have to toil and drudge. They do nothing." To these gay men life is a thrill and an excitement. They stare at other people, and in turn are stared at. The watch-chain jingles. The cup foams. The cheeks flush. The eyes flash. The midnight hears their guffaw. They swagger. They jostle decent men off the sidewalk. They take the name of God in vain. They parody the hymn they learned at their mother's knee; and to all pictures of coming disaster they cry out "who cares!" and to the counsel of some Christian friend, "Who are you!" Passing along the street some night, you hear a shriek in a grog-shop, the rattle of the watchman's club, the rush of the police. What is the matter now? O, this reckless young man has been killed in a grog-shop fight. Carry him home to his father's house. Parents will come down and wash his wounds, and close his eyes in death. They forgive him all he ever did, though he can not in his silence ask it. The prodigal has got home at last. Mother will go to her little garden, and get the sweetest flowers, and twist them into a chaplet for the silent heart of the wayward boy, and push back from the bloated brow the long locks that were once her pride: And the air will be rent with the father's cry, "O, my son, my son, my poor son! Would God I had died for thee, O, my son, my son!"

I go further, and say those are unchristian amusements which become the chief business of a man's life. Life is an earnest thing. Whether we were born in a palace or a hovel; whether we are affluent or pinched, we have to work. If you do not sweat with toil, you will sweat with disease. You have a soul that is to be transfigured amid the pomp of a judgment-day; and after the sea has sung its last chant, and the mountain shall have come down in an avalanche of rock, you will live and think and act, high on a throne where seraphs sing, or deep in a dungeon where demons howl. In a world where there is so much to do for yourselves, and so much to do for others, God pity that man who has nothing to do.

Your sports are merely means to an end. They are alleviations and helps. The arm of toil is the only arm strong enough to bring up the bucket out of the deep well of pleasure. Amusement is only the bower where business and philanthropy rest while on their way to stirring achievements. Amusements are merely the vines that grow about the anvil of toil, and the blossoming of the hammers. Alas for the man who spends his life in laboriously doing nothing, his days in hunting up lounging-places and loungers, his nights in seeking out some gas-lighted foolery! The man who always has on his sporting jacket, ready to hunt for game in the mountain or fish in the brook, with no time to pray, or work, or read, is not so well off as the greyhound that runs by his side, or the fly-bait with which he whips the stream.

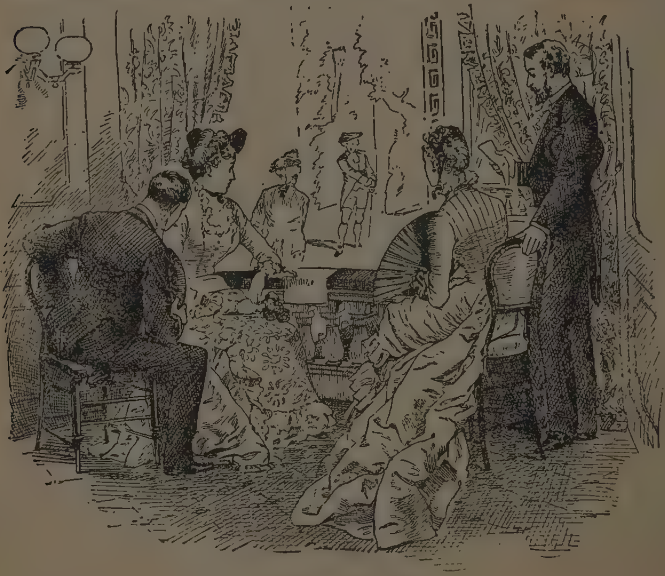
A man who does not work does not know how to play. If God had intended us to do nothing but laugh, we would have been all mouth; but He has given us shoulders with which to lift, and hands with which to work, and brains with with which to think. The amusements of life are merely the orchestra playing while the great tragedy of life plunges through its five acts—infancy, childhood, manhood, old age, and death. Then exit the last chance for mercy. Enter the overwhelming realities of an eternal world!

I go further, and say that all those amusements are wrong, which lead into bad company. If you belong to an organization where you have to associate with the intemperate, with the unclean, with the abandoned, however well they may be dressed, in the name of God quit it. They will despoil your nature. They will undermine your moral character. They will drop you when you are destroyed. They will give not one cent to support your children when you are dead. They will weep not one tear at your burial. They will chuckle over your damnation.

O, beware of evil companionship. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

I want to give you one more rule. Any amusement that gives you a distaste for domestic life is bad. How many bright domestic circles have been broken up by sinful pleasuring! The father went off, the mother went off, the child went off. There are to-day the fragments before me of a great many blasted households. O, if you have wandered away, I would like to charm you back by the sound of that one word "home." Do you not know that you have but little more time to give to domestic welfare? Do you not see, father, that your children are soon to get out into the world, and all the influence for good you are to have over them you are to have now? Death will break in on your conjugal relations, and alas, if you have to stand over the grave of one who perished from your neglect!

I saw a wayward husband standing at the death-bed of his Christian wife, and I saw her point to a ring on her finger, and heard her say to husband "Do you see that ring?" He replied, "Yes, I see it." "Well," said she, "do you remember who put it there?" "Yes," said he," "I put it there;" and all the past seemed to rush upon him. By the memory of that day when, in the presence of men and angels, you promised to be faithful in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health; by the memory of those pleasant hours when you sat together in your new home talking of a bright future; by the cradle and the joyful hour when one life was spared and another given; by that sick-bed, when the little one lifted up the hands and called for help, and you knew he must die, and he put one arm around each of your necks and brought you very near together in that dying kiss; by the little grave that you never think of without a rush of tears; by the family Bible, where, amidst stories of heavenly



AT THE THEATER.

love, is the brief but expressive record of births and deaths; by the neglects of the past, and by the agonies of the future; by a judgment-day, when husbands and wives, parents and children, in immortal groups, will stand to be caught up in shining array, or to shrink down into darkness; by all that, I beg you to give to home your best affections. I ask you the question that Gehazi asked of the Shunamite: "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with thy child?" God grant that it may be everlastingly well.

By these four or five rules I want you to try all amusements, and I especially want you to try the American theater. It cannot stand the test. It is a war on home, it is a war on physical health, it is at war on man's moral nature. It is the broad avenue through which tens of thousands press into the grog-shop and the brothel. O, Christian people, stand back from it. Do not say, "I go sometimes;" stand back from it.

The Rev. Dr. Hatfield, of New York, once said to me, "I used to go to the theater when I was a young man. While I was in town, a Christian friend from the country came to the city. She was visiting at a friend's house. I went down to see her, and found that she had gone to the theater. I went to the theater. I got inside, and I looked, and there I saw her fascinated with an objectionable play, and I said, 'Is it possible? this Christian woman looking at such things as these!' although I was not a Christian man, I said, 'I'll never come to the theater again;' and that was the last time I was ever there. The incongruity of a Christian at the theater drove me back from all such indulgences." They tell me that sometimes ministers of the Gospel go to such places. Let me tell you of one who went to a theater in Boston some years ago, and sat in the pit, with his hat drawn down over his eyes, studying elocution, and a ruffian recognized him. He had not his hat drawn enough down, and the ruffian called him out by name, "Rev. Mr. So-and-

So," and called it with a blasphemy, and concluded by saying, "Let us pray!" The attention of the whole audience was directed to him. What was the matter? Why did he sit with his hat drawn down over his eyes? He was ashamed to be there. He had no business to be there. A vast incongruity in the case of any Christian man, when he sits in the theater. The theater as it is now, unwashed and polluted, is every day becoming more polluted; for I saw in some of the papers lately a statement of the fact that, in order to meet the pressure of these times, and more powerfully attract, the theaters are now presenting more indecent plays than ever. O, stand back from it, Christian men and women. Before God, promise your own soul, promise the Church of Christ, that you will never be seen in such places.

It is not all of life to live. We were not sent into the world merely for gayeties and amusements. Are you prepared for the great future? Hear you not the tolling of old Trinity and the tramp of the Seventh Regiment, and see you not the carrying out of the chief magistrate of our neighboring city? What does it all mean? A warning to the stout and the well; for he said, "I can endure anything." This morning the sunlight gilds his grave! O, men of the strong arm, and of the stout chest, and of the swarthy development, "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

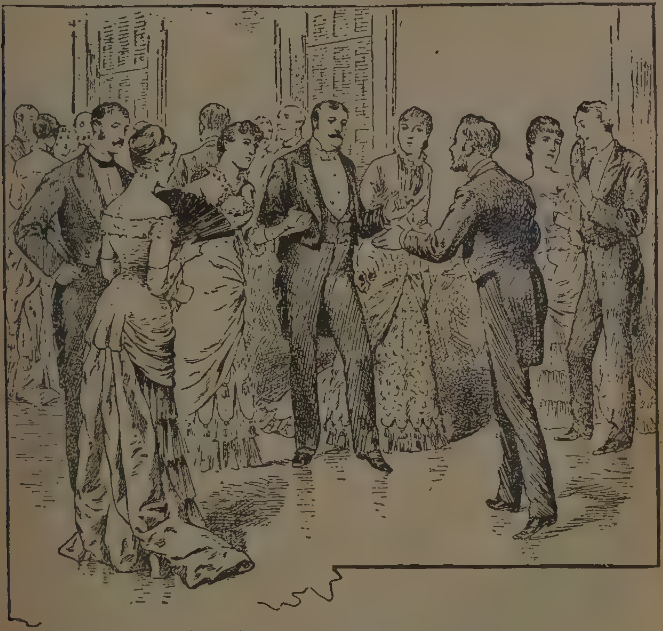
I read of a woman who had gone all the rounds of sinful amusement, and she came to die. She said, "I will die to-night at six o'clock." "O," they said, "I guess not, you don't seem to be sick." "I shall die at six o'clock, and my soul will be lost. I know it will be lost. I have sinned away my day of grace." The noon came. They desired to seek religious counsel. "O, no," she said, "it is of no use. My day is gone. I have been all the rounds of worldly pleasure, and it is too late. I shall die to-night at six o'clock, and my soul will be lost." The day wore away, and it came to four o'clock, and to five o'clock, and she cried out at five o'clock, "Destroyed spirits, ye shall not have me yet; it is not six, it is not six!" The moments went by and the shadows began to gather, and the clock struck six, and while it was striking her soul went. What hour God will call for you I do not know—whether six o'clock, to-night, or three o'clock this afternoon, or at one o'clock, or this moment. Sitting where you are, falling forward, or standing where you are, dropping down, where will you go to? I want to tell you that Christ died for your immortal soul, and that if you will repent, you may be saved. Choose Christ this day and live.

CHAPTER XVI.

DANCING.

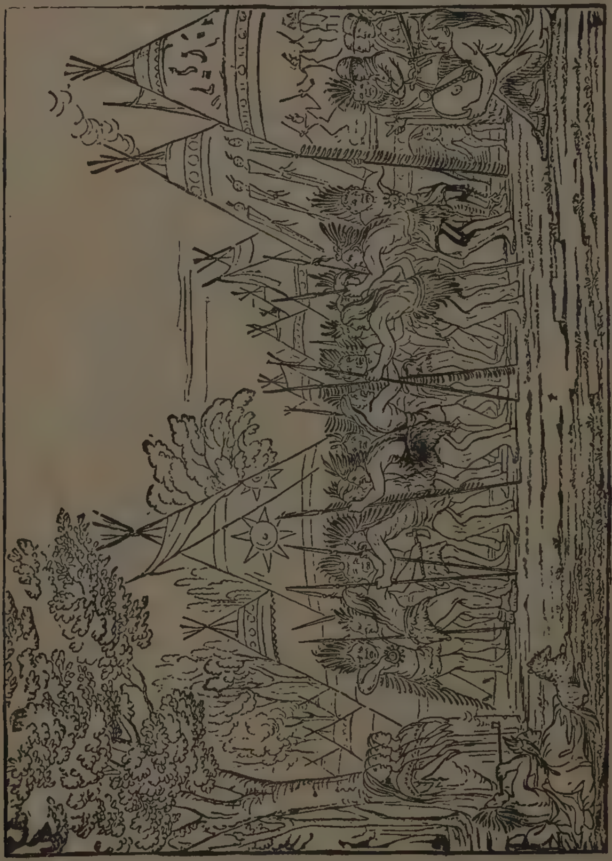
I will not discuss the old question, Is dancing right or wrong? but I will discuss the question, Does dancing take too much place and occupy too much time in modern society? I hope to carry with me the earnest conviction of all thoughtful persons. You will admit, whatever you think of that style of amusement and exercise, that from many circles it has crowded out all intelligent conversation. You will also admit that it has made the condition of those who do not dance, either because they do not know how, or because they have not the health to endure it, or because through conscientious scruples they must decline the exercise, very uncomfortable. You will also admit that it has passed in many cases from an amusement to a dissipation, and you are easily able to understand the bewilderment of the educated Chinaman, who, standing in the brilliant circle where there was dancing going on four or five hours, and the guests seemed exhausted, turned to the proprietor of the house and said, "Why don't you allow your servants to do this for you?" You are also willing to admit that whatever be your idea of the old-fashioned square dance, and of many of the processional romps, in which I can see no evil, the round dance is administrative of evil and ought to be driven out of all respectable circles. I am by natural temperament and religious theory opposed to the position taken by all those who are horified at playfulness on the part of the young, and who think that all questions are decided—questions of decency and morals—by the position of the feet, while, on the other hand, I can see nothing but ruin, temporal and eternal, for those who go into the dissipations of social life, dissipations which have already despoiled thousands of young men and young women of all that is noble and useful in life.

Dancing is the graceful motion of the body adjusted by art to the sound and measures of musical instrument or of the human voice. All nations have danced. The ancients thought that Castor and Pollux taught the art to the Lacedæmonians. But whoever started it, all climes have adopted it. In ancient times they had the festal dance, the military dance, the mediatorial dance, the bacchanalian dance, and queens and lords swayed to and fro in the gardens, and the rough backwoodsman, with this exercise awakened the echo of the forest. There is something in the sound of lively



DANCING THE QUADRILLE.

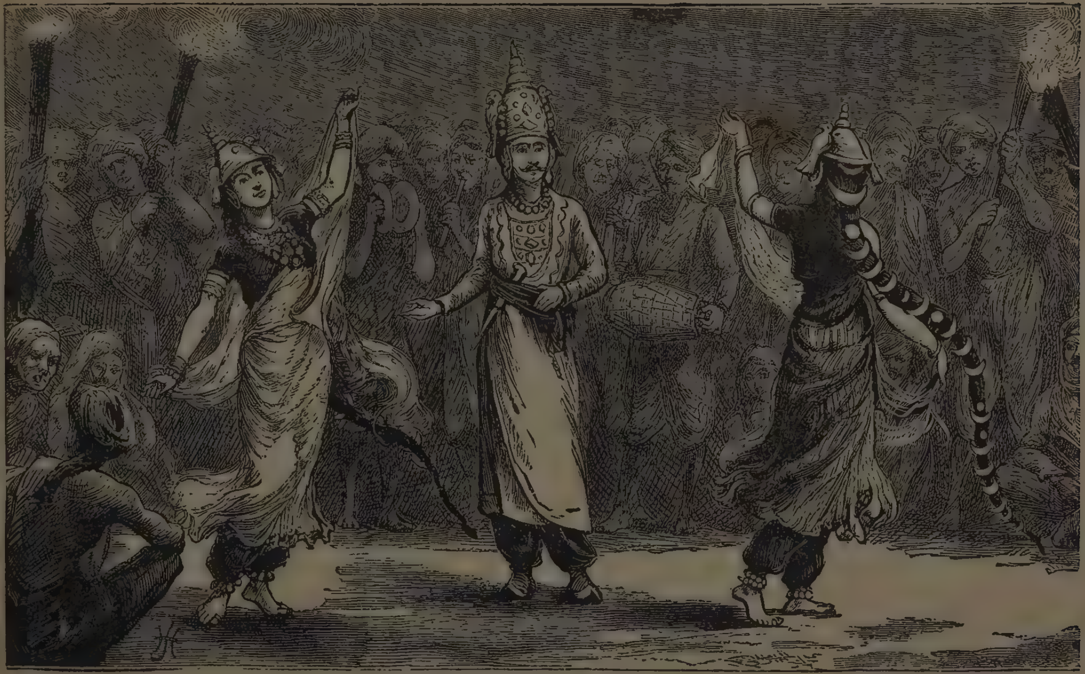
music to evoke the movement of the hand and foot, whether cultured or uncultured. Passing down the street we unconsciously keep step to the sound of the brass band, while the Christian in church with his foot beats time while his soul rises upon some great harmony. While this is so in civilized lands, the red men of the forest have their scalp dances, their green-corn dances, their war dances. In ancient times the



A DAKOTA INDIAN DANCE.

exercise was so utterly and completely depraved that the church anathematized it. The old Christian fathers expressed themselves most vehemently against it. St. Chrysostom says: "The feet were not given for dancing, but to walk modestly, not to leap impudently like camels." One of the dogmas of the ancient church reads: "A dance is the devil's possession, and he that entereth into a dance entereth into his possession. As many paces as a man makes in dancing, so many paces does he make to hell." Elsewhere the old dogmas declared this: "The woman that singeth in the dance is the princess of the devil, and those that answer are her clerks, and the beholders are his friends, and the music are his bellows, and the fiddlers are the ministers of the devil. For as when hogs are strayed, if the hogsherd call one all assemble together, so when the devil calleth one woman to sing in the dance, or to play on some musical instrument, presently all the dancers gather together." This indiscriminate and universal denunciation of the exercise came from the fact that it was utterly and completely depraved.

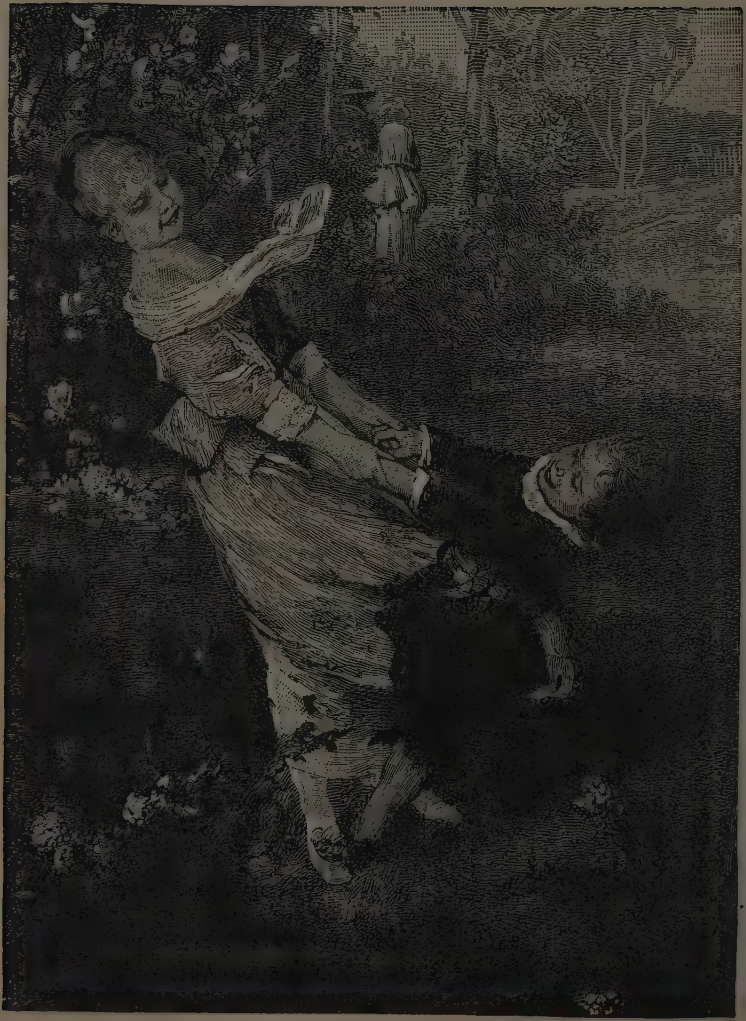
But we are not to discuss the customs of the olden times, but customs now. We are not to take the evidence of the ancient fathers, but our own conscience, enlightened by the Word of God, is to be the standard. Oh, bring no harsh criticism upon the young. I would not drive out from their soul all the hilarities of life. I do not believe that the inhabitants of ancient Wales, when they stepped to the sound of the rustic harp, went down to ruin. I believe God intended the young people to laugh and romp and play. I do not believe God would have put exuberance in the soul and exuberance in the body if He had not intended they should in some wise exercise it and demonstrate it. If a mother join hands with her children and cross the floor to the sound of music, I see no harm. If a group of friends cross and recross the room to the sound of piano well played, I see no harm. If a company, all of whom are known to host and



NAUTCH GIRLS DANCING.

hostess as reputable, cross and recross the room to the sound of musical instrument, I see no harm. I tried for a long while to see harm in it. I could not see any harm in it. I never shall see any harm in that. Our men need to be kept young, young for many years longer than they are kept young. Never since my boyhood days have I had more sympathy with the innocent hilarities of life than I have now. What though we have felt heavy burdens! What though we have had to endure hard knocks! Is that any reason why we should stand in the way of those who, unstung of life's misfortunes, are full of exhilaration and full of glee?

God bless the young! They will have to wait many a long year before they hear me say anything that would depress their ardor or clip their wings or make them believe that life is hard and cold and repulsive. It is not. I tell them, judging from my own experience, that they will be treated a great deal better than they deserve. We have no right to grudge the innocent hilarities to the young. As we go on in years let us remember that we had our gleeful times; let us be able to say, "We had our good times, let others have their good times." Let us willingly resign our place to those who are coming after us. I will cheerfully give them everything—my house, my books, my position in society, my heritage. After twenty, forty, fifty years we have been drinking out of the cup of this life, do not let us begrudge the passing of it that others may take a drink. But while all this is so, we can have no sympathy with sinful indulgences. What are the dissipations of social life to-day, and what are the dissipations of the ball-room? In some cities and in some places reaching all the year round, in other places only in the summer time and at the watering-places. There are dissipations of social life that are cutting a very wide swathe with the sickle of death, and hundreds and thousands are going down under these influences, and my subject in application is as wide as the continent and as wide



MERRY CHILDREN.

as Christendom. The whirlpool of social dissipation is drawing down some of the brightest craft that ever sailed the sea—thousands and tens of thousands of the bodies and souls annually consumed in the conflagration of ribbons.

Social dissipation is the abbettor of pride,-it is the instigator of jealousy, it is the sacrificial altar of health, it is the defiler of the soul, it is the avenue of lust and it is the curse of every town in America. Social dissipation. It may be hard to draw the line and say that this is right on the one side, and that is wrong on the other side. It is not necessary that we do that, for God has put a throne in every man's soul, and I appeal to that throne. When a man does wrong he knows he does wrong, and when he does right he knows he does right, and to that throne that Almighty God lifted in the heart of every man and woman I appeal. As to the physical ruin wrought by the dissipations of social life there can be no doubt. What may we expect of people who work all day and dance all night? After awhile they will be thrown on society nervous, exhausted imbeciles. These people who indulge in the suppers and the midnight revels and then go home in the cold unwrapped in limbs, will after awhile be found to have been written down in God's eternal records as suicides, as much suicides as if

THE LATEST SENSATION.

they had taken their life with a pistol, or a knife, or strychnine

How many people in America have stepped from the ballroom into the grave-yard? Consumptions and swift neuralgias are close on their track. Amid many of the glittering scenes of social life in America diseases stand right and left and balance and chain. The breath of the sepulchre floats up through the perfume, and the froth of Death's lip bubbles up in the champagne. I am told that in some parts of this country, in some of the cities, there are parents who have actually given up housekeeping and gone to boarding that they may give their time illimitably to social dissipations. I have known such cases. I have known family after family blasted in that way. Father and mother turning their back upon all quiet culture and all the amenities of home, leading forth their entire family in the wrong direction. Annihilated, worse than annihilated—for there are some things worse than annihilation. I give you the history of more than one family in America when I say they went on in the dissipations of social life until the father dropped

SOCIETY FAVORITES.

into a lower style of dissipation, and after awhile the son was tossed out into society a nonentity, and after awhile the daughter eloped with a French dancing-master, and after awhile the mother, getting on further and further in years, tries to hide the wrinkles but fails in the attempt, trying all the arts of the belle, an old flirt, a poor miserable butterfly without any wings.

I tell you that the dissipations of social life in America, are despoiling the usefulness of a vast multitude of people. What do those people care about the fact that there are whole nations in sorrow and suffering and agony, when they have for consideration the more important question about the size of a glove or the tie of a cravat? Which one of them ever bound up the wounds of the hospital? Which one of them ever went out to care for the poor? Which of them do you find in the haunts of sin distributing tracts? They live on themselves, and it is very poor pasture. Oh! what a belittling process to the human mind this everlasting question about dress, this discussion of fashionable infinitesimals, this group looking askance at the glass, wondering with an infinity of earnestness how that last geranium leaf does look—this shrivelling of a man's moral dignity until it is not observable to the naked eye, this Spanish inquisition of a tight shoe, this binding up of an immortal soul in a ruffle, this pitching off of an immortal nature over the rocks when God intended it for great and everlasting uplifting. You know as well as I do that the dissipations of social life in America to-day are destroying thousands and tens of thousands of people, and it is time that the pulpits lift their voice against them, for I prophesy the eternal misfortune of all those who enter the rivalry. When did the white, glistening boards of a dissipated ball-room ever become the road to heaven? When was a torch for eternity ever lighted at the chandelier of a dissipated scene? From a table spread after such an excited and desecrated scene who ever went home to pray?

In my parish at Philadelphia there was a young woman brilliant as a spring morning. She gave her life to the world. She would come to religious meetings and under conviction would for a little while begin to pray, and then would rush off again into the discipleship of the world. She had all the world could offer of brilliant social position. One day a flushed and excited messenger asked me to hasten to her house, for she was dying. I entered the room. There were the physicians, there was the mother, there lay this disciple of the world. I asked her some questions in regard to the soul. She made no answer. I knelt down to pray. I rose again, and desiring to get some expression in regard to her eternal interests, I said: "Have you any hope?" and then for the first time her lips moved in a whisper as she said: "No hope!" Then she died. The world, she served it, and the world helped her not in the last. I would wish that I could marshal all the young people of our country to an appreciation of the fact that they have an earnest work in life, and that their amusements and recreations are only to help them along in that work. At the time of a religious awakening a Christian young woman spoke to a man in regard to his soul's salvation. He floated out into the world. After awhile she became worldly in her Christian profession. The man said one day, "Well, I am as safe as she is. I was a Christian, she said she was a Christian. She talked with me about my soul; if she is safe I am safe." Then a sudden accident took him off without an opportunity to utter one word of prayer. Do you not realize, have you not noticed, young men and old—have you not noticed that the dissipations of social life are blasting and destroying a vast multitude?

CHAPTER XVII.

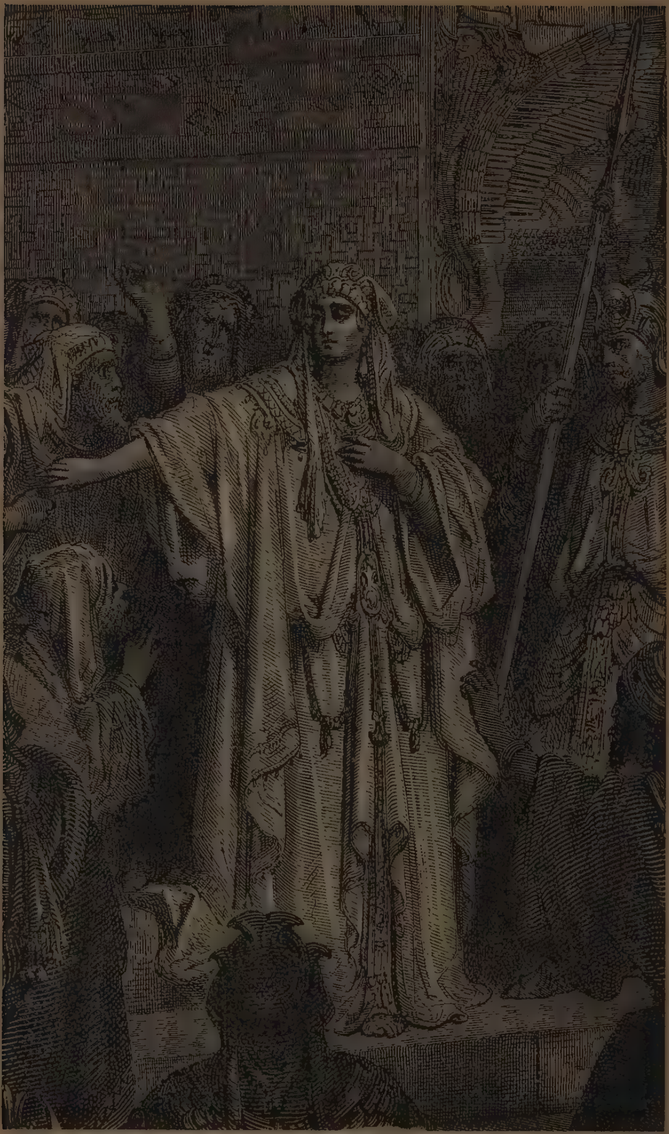
SOCIETY WOMEN.

It is a strong way of putting the truth, that a woman who seeks in worldly advantage her chief enjoyment, will come to disappointment and death.

My friends, you all want to be happy. You have had a great many recipes by which it is proposed to give you satisfaction—solid satisfaction. At times you feel a thorough unrest. You know as older people what it is to be depressed. As dark shadows sometimes fall upon the geography of the school-girl as on the page of the spectacled philosopher. I have seen as cloudy days in May as in November. There are no deeper sighs breathed by the grandmother than by the granddaughter. I correct the popular impression that people are happier in childhood and youth than they ever will be again. If we live aright, the older we are the happier we are. The happiest woman that I ever knew was a Christian octogenarian; her hair white as white could be; the sunlight of heaven late in the afternoon gilding the peaks of snow. I have to say to a great many young people that the most miserable time you are ever to have is just now. As you advance in life, as you come out into the world and have your head and heart all full of good, honest, practical, Christian work, then you will know what it is to begin to be happy. There are those who would have us believe that life is chasing thistle-down and grasping bubbles. We have not found it so. To many of us it has been discovering diamonds larger than the Kohinoor, and I think that our joy will continue to increase until nothing short of the everlasting jubilee of heaven will be able to express it.

Horatio Greenough, at the close of the hardest life a man ever lives—the life of an American artist—wrote: "I don't want to leave this world until I give some sign that, born by the grace of God in this land, I have found life to be a very cheerful thing, and not the dark and bitter thing with which my early prospects were clouded." Albert Barnes, the good Christian, known the world over, stood in his pulpit in Philadelphia, at seventy or eighty years of age, and said: "This world is so very attractive to me, I am very sorry I shall have to leave it." I know that Solomon said some very dolorous things about this world, and three times declared: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." I suppose it was a reference to those times in his career when his seven hundred wives almost pestered the life out of him! But I would rather turn to the description he has given of religion, when he says in another place: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." It is reasonable to expect it will be so. The longer the fruit hangs on the tree, the riper and more mellow it ought to grow. You plant one grain of corn, and it will send up a stalk with two ears, each having nine hundred and fifty grains, so that one grain planted will produce nineteen hundred grains. And ought not the implantation of a grain of Christian principle in a youthful soul develop into a large crop of gladness on earth and to a harvest of eternal joy in heaven? I wish to show some of the mistakes which young people make in regard to happiness, and point out to young women what I consider to be the sources of complete satisfaction.

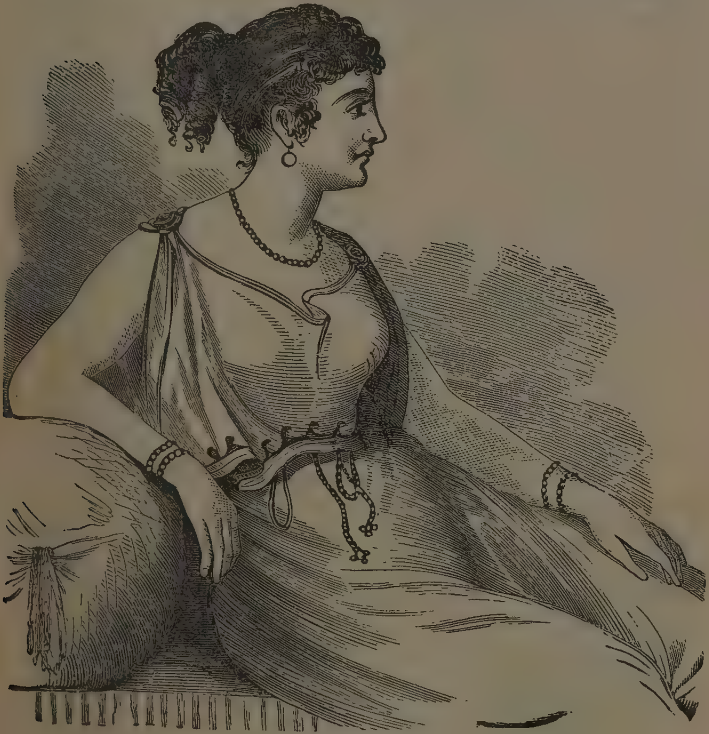
In the first place, I advise you not to build your happiness upon mere social position. Young persons looking off upon life, are apt to think that if, by some stroke of what is called good-luck, they could arrive in an elevated and affluent position, a little higher than that in which God has called them to live, they would be completely happy. Infinite mistake! The palace floor of Ahasuerus is red with the blood of



QUEEN VASHTI.

Vashti's broken heart. There have been no more scalding tears wept than those which coursed the cheeks of Josephine. If the sobs of unhappy womanhood in the great cities could break through the tapestried wall, that sob would come along your streets to-day like the simoon of the desert. Sometimes I have heard in the rustling of the robes on the city pavement the hiss of the adders that followed in the wake. You have come out from your home, and you have looked up at the great house, and coveted a life under those arches, when, perhaps, at that very moment, within that house, there may have been the wringing of hands, the start of horror, and the very agony of hell. I knew such a one. Her father's house was plain, most of the people who came there were plain; but, by a change in fortune such as sometimes comes, a hand had been offered that led her into a brilliant sphere. All the neighbors congratulated her upon her grand prospects; but what an exchange! On her side it was a heart full of generous impulse and affection. On his side it was a soul dry and withered as the stubble of the field. On her side it was a father's house, where God was honored and the Sabbath light flooded the rooms with the very mirth of heaven. On his side it was a gorgeous residence, and the coming of mighty men to be entertained there; but within it were revelry and godlessness. Hardly had the orange blossoms of the marriage feast lost their fragrance, than the night of discontent began to cast here and there its shadow. The ring on the finger was only one link of an iron chain that was to bind her eternally captive. Cruelties and unkindness changed all those splendid trappings into a hollow mockery. The platters of solid silver, the caskets of pure gold, the head-dress of gleaming diamonds, were there; but no God, no peace, no kind words, no Christian sympathy. The festive music that broke on the captive's ear turned out to be a dirge, and the wreath in the plush was a reptile coil, and the upholstery that swayed in the wind was the wing of a destroying angel, and the bead-drops on the pitcher were the sweat of everlasting despair. O, how many rivalries and unhappinesses among those who seek in social life their chief happiness! It matters not how fine you have things; there are other people who have them finer. Taking out your watch to tell the hour of day, some one will correct your timepiece by pulling out a watch more richly chased and jeweled. Ride in a carriage that cost you eight hundred dollars, and before you get around the park you will meet one that cost two thousand dollars. Have on your wall a picture by Copley, and before night you will hear of some one who has a picture fresh from the studio of Church or Bierstadt. All that this world can do for you in ribbons, in silver, in gold, in Axminster plush, in Gobelin tapestry, in wide halls, in lordly acquaintanceship, will not give you the ten-thousandth part of a grain of solid satisfaction. The English lord, moving in the very highest sphere, was one day found seated, with his chin on his hand, and his elbow on the window-sill, looking out, and saying: "O, I wish I could exchange places with that dog." Mere social position will never give happiness to a woman's soul. I have walked through the halls of those who despise the common people; I have sat at their banquets; I have had their friendship; yea, I have heard from their own lips the story of their disquietude; and I tell the young women of our land that they who build on mere social position their soul's immortal happiness, are building on the sand.

I go further, and advise you not to depend for enjoyment upon mere personal attractions. It would be sheer hypocrisy, because we may not have it ourselves, to despise, or affect to despise, beauty in others. When God gives it, He gives it as a blessing and as a means of usefulness. David and his army were coming down from the mountains to destroy Nabal and his flocks and vineyards. The beautiful Abigail, the wife of Nabal, went out to arrest him when he came down from the mountains, and she succeeded. Coming to the foot of the hill, she knelt. David with his army of sworn men came down over the cliffs, and when he saw her kneeling at the foot of the hill, he cried: "Halt!" to his men, and the caves echoed it: "Halt! halt!" That one beautiful woman kneeling at the foot of the cliff had arrested all those armed troops. A dew-drop dashed back Niagara. The Bible sets before us the portraits of Sarah and Rebecca, and Abishag, Absalom's sister, and Job's daughters, and says. "They were fair to look upon." By out-door

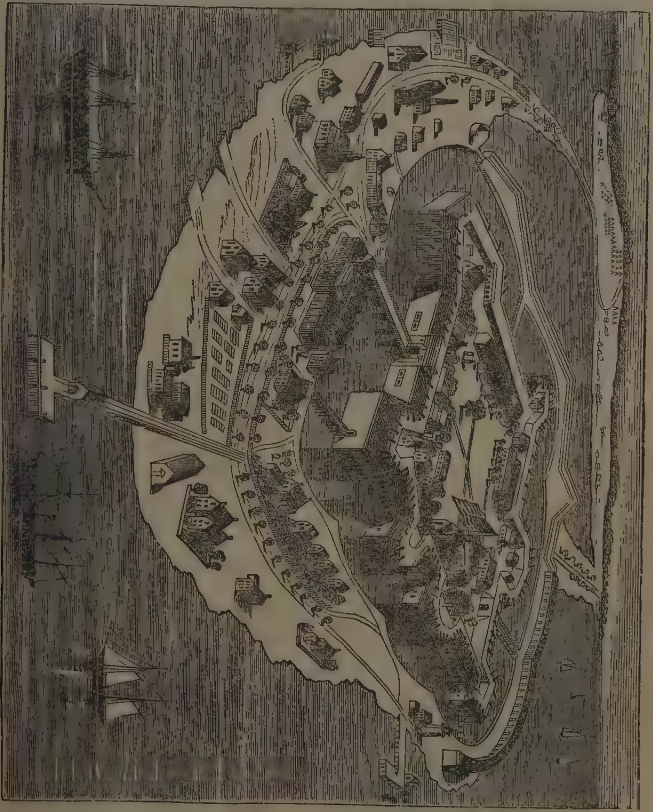


A GRECIAN BEAUTY.

exercise, and by skillful arrangement of apparel, let women make themselves attractive. The sloven has only one mission, and that to excite our loathing and disgust. But alas! for those who depend upon personal charms for their happiness. Beauty is such a subtle thing, it does not seem to depend upon facial proportions, or upon the sparkle of the eye, or upon the flush of the cheek. You sometimes find it among irregular features. It is the soul shining through the face that makes one beautiful. But alas! for those who depend upon mere personal charms. They will come to disappointment and to a great fret. There are so many different opinions about what are personal charms; and then sickness, and trouble, and age, do make such ravages. The poorest god that a woman ever worships is her own face. The saddest sight in all the world is a woman who has built everything on good looks, when the charms begin to vanish. O, how they try to cover the wrinkles and hide the ravages of time! When Time, with iron-shod feet, steps on a face, the hoof-marks remain, and you cannot hide them. It is silly to try to hide them. I think the most repulsive fool in all the world is an old fool!

Why, my friends, should you be ashamed to be getting old? It is a sign—it is *prima facie* evidence, that you have behaved tolerably well or you would not have lived to this time. The grandest thing, I think, is eternity, and that is made up of countless years. When the Bible would set forth the attractiveness of Jesus Christ, it says: "His hair was white as snow." But when the color goes from the cheek, and the lustre from the eye, and the spring from the step, and the gracefulness from the gait, alas! for those who have built their time and their eternity upon good looks. But all the passage of years cannot take out of one's face benignity, and kindness, and compassion, and faith. Culture your heart and you culture your face. The brightest glory that ever beamed from a woman's face is the religion of

Jesus Christ. In the last war two hundred wounded soldiers came to Philadelphia one night, and came unheralded, and they had to extemporize a hospital for them, and the Christian women went out that night to take care of the poor wounded fellows. That night I saw a Christian woman go through the wards of the hospital, her sleeves rolled up, ready for hard work, her hair dishevelled in the excitement of the hours. Her face was plain, very plain; but after the wounds

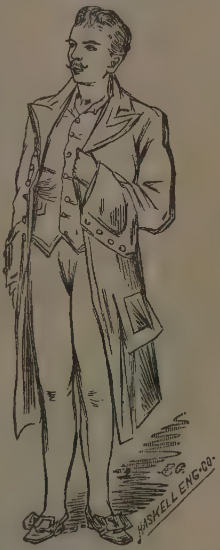


FORTRESS MONROE IN 1861.

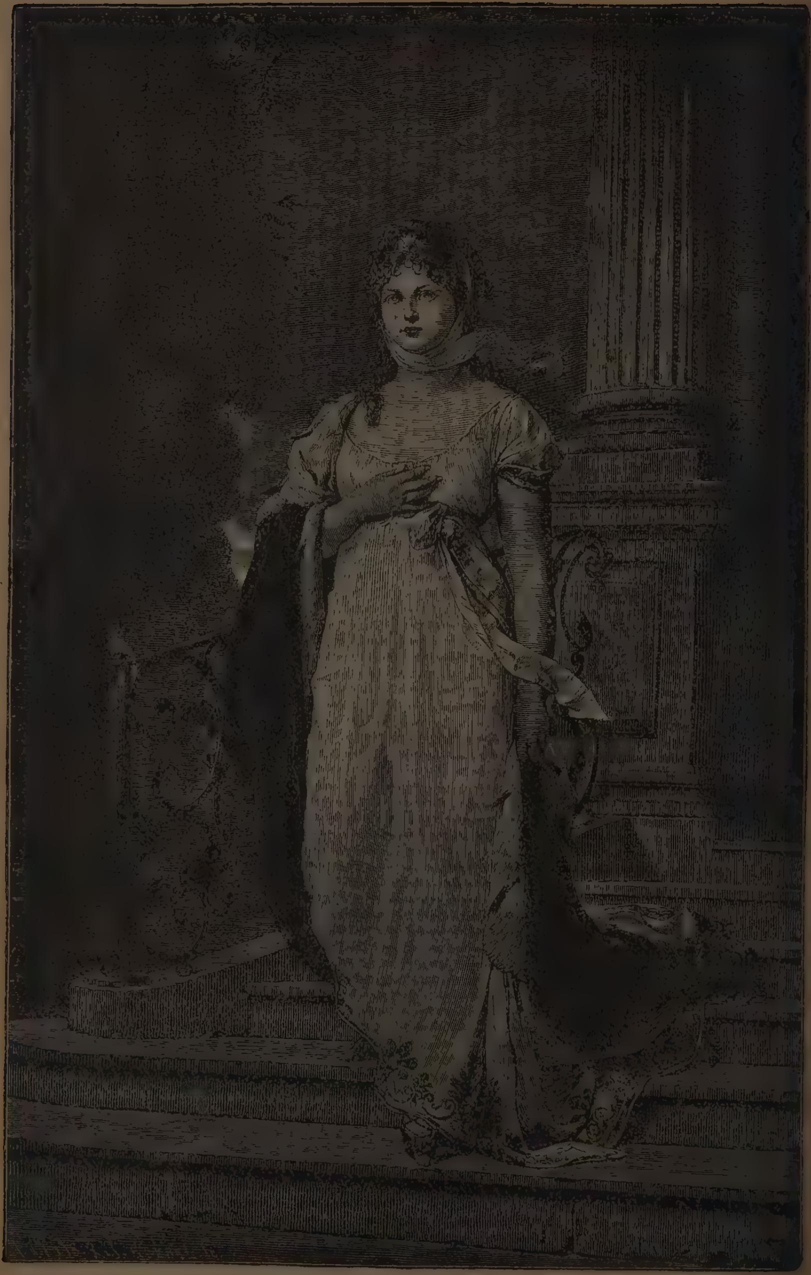
were washed and the new bandages were put round the splintered limbs, and the exhausted boy fell off into his first pleasant sleep, she put her hand on his brow, and he started in his dream, and said: "O, I thought an angel touched me!" There may have been no classic elegance in the features of Mrs. Harris, who came into the hospital after the "Seven Days" awful fight before Richmond, as she sat down by a wounded drummer-boy and heard him soliloquize: "A ball through my body, and my poor mother will never again see her boy. What a pity it is!" And she leaned over him and said: "Shall I be your mother, and comfort you?" And he looked up and said: "Yes, I'll try to think she's here. Please to write a long letter to her, and tell her all about it, and send her a lock of my hair and comfort her But I would like to have you tell her how much I suffered—yes, I would like you to do that, for she would feel so for me. Hold my hand while I die." There may have been no classic elegance in her features, but all the hospitals of Harrison's Landing and Fortress Monroe would have agreed that she was beautiful; and if any rough man in all that ward had insulted her, some wounded soldier would have leaped from his couch, on his best foot, and struck him dead with a crutch.

I advise you not to depend for happiness upon the flatteries of men. It is a poor compliment to your sex that so many men feel obliged in your presence to offer unmeaning compliments. Men capable of elegant and elaborate conversation elsewhere sometimes feel called upon at the door of the drawing-room to drop their common sense and to dole out sickening flatteries. They say things about your dress, and about your appearance, that you know, and they know, are false. They say you are an angel. You know you are not. Determined to tell the truth in office, and store, and shop, they consider it honorable to lie to a woman. The same thing that they told you on this side of the drawing-room, three minutes ago they said to some one on the other side of the drawing-room. O, let no one trample on your self-respect. The meanest thing on which a woman can build her happiness is the flatteries of men.

I charge you not to depend for happiness upon the discipleship of fashion. Some men are just as proud of being out of fashion as others are of being in it. I have seen men as vain of their old fashioned coat, and their eccentric hat, as your brainless fop is proud of his dangling fooleries. Fashion sometimes makes a reasonable demand of us, and then we ought to yield to it. The daisies of the field have their fashion of color and leaf; the honeysuckles have their fashion of ear-drop; and the snow-flakes flung out of the winter heavens have their fashion of exquisiteness. After the summer shower the sky weds the earth with ring of rainbow. And I do not think we have a right to despise all the elegancies and fashions of this world, especially if they make reasonable demands upon us; but the discipleship and worship of fashion is death to the body, and death to the soul. I am glad the world is improving. Look at the fashion plates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and you will find that the world is not so extravagant and extraordinary now as it was then, and all the marvellous things that the grand-daughter will do will never equal that done by the grandmother. Go still further back to the Bible times, and you find that in those times fashion wielded a more terrible scepter. You have only to turn to the third chapter of Isaiah.


HASKELL ENG. CO.

Only think of a woman having all that on! I am glad that the world is getting better, and that fashion which has dominated in the world so ruinously in other days has for a little time, for a little degree at any rate, relaxed its energies. Oh, the danger of the discipleship of fashion. All the splendors and extraganza of this world dyed into your robe and flung over your shoulder cannot wrap peace around your heart for a single moment. The gayest wardrobe will utter no voice of condolence in the day of trouble and darkness. That woman is grandly dressed, and only she, who is wrapped in the robe of a Savior's righteousness. The home may be very humble, the hat may be very plain, the frock may be very coarse; but the halo of heaven settles in the room when she wears it, and the faintest touch of the resurrection angel will change that garment into raiment exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it. I speak to you, young woman, to-day, to say that this world cannot make you happy. I know it is a bright world, with glorious sunshine, and golden rivers, and fire-worked sunset, and bird orchestra, and the darkest cave has its crystals, and the wrathiest wave its foam-wreath, and the coldest midnight its flaming aurora; but God will put out all these lights with the blast of his own nostrils, and the glories of this world will perish in the final conflagration. You will never be happy until you get your sins forgiven and allow Christ Jesus to take full possession of your soul. He will be your friend in every perplexity. He will be your comfort in every trial. He will be your defender in every strait. I do not ask you to bring, like Mary, the spices to the sepulcher of a dead Christ, but to bring your all to the feet of a living Jesus. His word is peace. His look is love. His hand is help. His touch is life. His smile is heaven. Oh, come, then, in flocks and groups! Come, like the south wind over banks of myrrh. Come, like the morning light tripping over the mountains. Wreathe all your affections for Christ's brow, set all your gems in Christ's coronet, pour all your voices into Christ's song, and let the air rustle with the wings of rejoicing angels, and the towers of God ring out the news of souls saved!



QUEEN LOUISE OF PRUSSIA.
[From a Painting by L. Richter.]

CHAPTER XVIII.

FASHION'S FOLLIES.

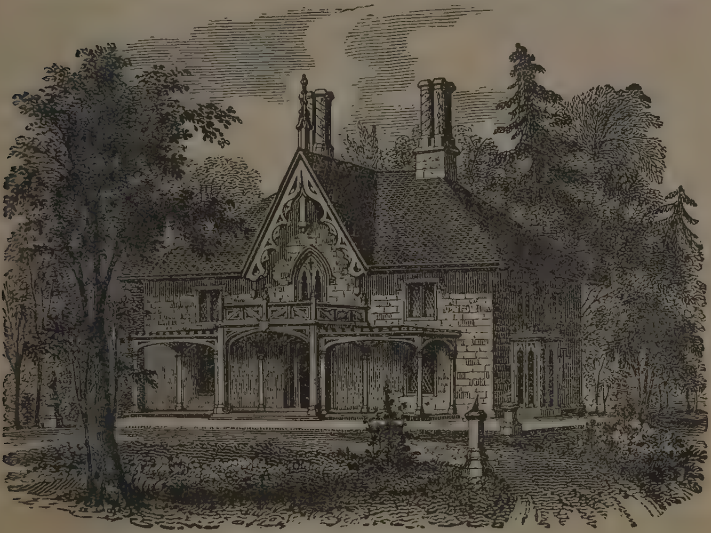
That we should all be clad, is proved by the opening of the first wardrobe in Paradise, with its apparel of dark green. That we should all, as far as our means allow us, be beautifully and gracefully appareled, is proved by the fact that God never made a wave but he gilded it with golden sunbeams, or a tree but he garlanded it with blossoms, or a sky but he studded it with stars, or allowed even the smoke of a furnace to ascend but he columned and turreted and domed and scrolled it into outlines of indescribable gracefullness. When I see the apple-orchards of the spring and the pageantry of the autumnal forests, I come to the conclusion that if nature ever does join the Church, while she may be a Quaker in the silence of her worship, she never will be a Quaker in the style of her dress. Why the notches of a fern leaf, or the stamen of a water-lily? Why, when the day departs, does it let the folding-doors of heaven stay open so long, when it might go in so quickly? One summer morning I saw an army of a million spears, each one adorned with a diamond of the first water—I mean the grass with the dew on it. When the prodigal came home his father not only put a coat on his back, but jewelry on his hand. Christ wore a beard. Paul, the bachelor apostle, not afflicted with any sentimentality, admired the arrangement of a woman's hair, when he said, in his epistle, "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory unto her." There will be fashion in heaven as on earth, but it will be a different kind of fashion. It will decide the color of the dress; and the population of that country, by a beautiful law, will wear white. I say these things as a background to my subject, to show that I have no prim, precise, prudish, or cast-iron theories on the subject of human apparel. But the goddess of fashion has set up her throne in this country and at the sound of the timbrels we are all expected to fall down and worship. The old and new testament of her bible are *Madame Demorest's Magazine* and *Harper's Bazar.* Her altars smoke with the sacrifice of the bodies, minds, and souls of ten thousand victims. In her temple four people stand in the organ-loft, and from them there comes down a cold drizzle of music, freezing on the ears of her worshipers. This goddess of fashion has become a rival of the Lord of heaven and earth, and it is high time that we unlimbered our batteries against this idolatry. When I come to count the victims of fashion I find as many masculine as feminine. Men make an easy tirade against woman, as though she were the chief worshiper at this idolatrous shrine. My words shall be as appropriate for the one as for the other.

Men are as much idolators of fashion as women, but they sacrifice on a different part of the altar. With men, the fashion goes to cigars and club-rooms and yachting parties and wine suppers. In the United States the men chew up and smoke one hundred millions of dollars' worth of tobacco every year. That is their fashion. In London, not long ago, a man died who started in life with seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, but he ate it all up in gluttonies, sending his agents to all parts of the earth for some rare delicacy for the palate, sometimes one plate of food costing him three or four hundred dollars. He ate up his whole fortune, and had only one guinea left; with that he bought a woodcock, and had it dressed in the very best style, ate it, gave two hours for digestion, then walked out on Westminster bridge and threw himself into the Thames, and died, doing on a large scale what you and I have often seen done on a small scale. But men do not abstain from millinery and elaboration of skirt through any superiority of humility. It is only because such appendages would be a blockade to business. What would sashes and trains three and a half yards long do in a stock market? And yet men are the disciples of fashion just as much as women. Some of them wear boots so tight that they can hardly walk in the paths of righteousness. And there are men who buy expensive suits of clothes and never pay for them, and who go through the streets in great stripes of color like animated checkerboards. Then there are multitudes of men who, not satisfied with the bodies the Lord gave them, are padded so that their shoulders shall be square, carrying around a small cotton plantation. And I understand a great many of them now paint their eyebrows and their lips, and I have heard from good authority that there are multitudes of men—things have got to such an awful pass—multitudes of men wearing corsets! I say these things because I want to show you that I am impartial in my words, and that both sexes, in the language of the Surrogate's office, shall "share and share alike." As God may help me, I shall show you what are the destroying and deathful influences of inordinate fashion.

The first baleful influence I notice is in fraud, ill-imitable and ghastly. Do you know that Arnold of the Revolution proposed to sell his country in order to get money to support his wife's wardrobe? I declare here before God that the effort to keep up expensive establishments in this country is sending more business men to temporal perdition than all other causes combined. What was it that sent Gilman to the penitentiary, and Philadelphia Morton to the watering of stocks, and the life insurance presidents to perjured statements about their assets, and has completely upset our American finances? What was it that overthrew Belknap, the United States Secretary at Washington, the crash of whose fall shook the continent? But why should I go to these famous defaultings to show what men will do in order to keep up great home style and expensive wardrobe, when you and I know scores of men who are put to their wit's end, and are lashed from January to December in the attempt. Our Washington politicians may theorize until the expiration of their terms of office as to the best way of improving our monetary condition in this country; it will be of no use, and things will be no better until we learn to put on our heads, and backs and feet, and hands no more than we can pay for.

There are clerks in stores and banks on limited salaries, who, in the vain attempt to keep the wardrobe of their family as showy as other folk's wardrobes, are dying of muffs, and diamonds, and camel's hair shawls, and high hats, and they have nothing left except what they give to cigars and wine suppers, and they die before their time and they will expect us ministers to preach about them as though they were the victims of early piety, and after a high-class funeral, with silver handles at the side of their coffin, of extraordinary brightness, it will be found out that the undertaker is cheated out of his legitimate expenses! Do not send to me to preach the funeral sermon of a man who dies like that. I will blurt out the whole truth, and tell that he was strangled to death by his wife's ribbons! The country is dressed to death. You are not surprised to find that the putting up of one public building in New York cost millions of dollars more than it ought to have cost, when you find that the man who gave out the contracts paid more than five thousand dollars for his daughter's wedding dress. Cashmeres of a thousand dollars each are not rare on Broadway. It is estimated that there are five thousand women in these two cities who have expended on their personal array two thousand dollars a year.

What are men to do in order to keep up such home wardrobes? Steal—that is the only respectable thing they can do! During the last fifteen years there have been innumerable fine businesses shipwrecked on the wardrobe. The temptation comes in this way: A man thinks more of his family than of all the world outside, and if they spend the evening in describing to him the superior wardrobe of the family across the street, that they cannot bear the sight of, the man is thrown on his gallantry and his pride of family, and, without translating his feelings into plain language, he goes into extortion and issuing of false stock, and skillful penmanship in writing somebody else's name at the foot of a promissory note; and they all go down together—the husband to the prison, the wife to the sewing machine, the children to be taken care of by those who were called poor relations. O! for some new Shakespeare to arise and write the tragedy of human clothes!

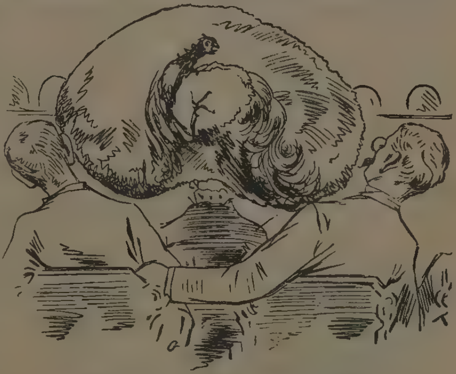


"A PLAIN BUT BEAUTIFUL HOME."

Act the first of the tragedy.—A plain but beautiful home. Enter, the newly-married pair. Enter, simplicity of manner and behavior. Enter, as much happiness as is ever found in one home. Act the second.—Discontent with the humble home. Enter, envy. Enter, jealousy. Enter, desire of display. Act the third.—Enlargement of expenses. Enter, all the queenly dressmakers. Enter, the French milliners. Act the fourth.—The tip-top of society. Enter, princes and princesses of New York life. Enter, magnificent plate and equipage. Enter, everything splendid. Act the fifth, and last.—Winding up of the scene. Enter, the assignee. Enter, the sheriff. Enter, the creditors. Enter, humiliation. Enter, the wrath of God. Enter, the contempt of society. Enter, death. Now, let the silk curtain drop on the stage. The farce is ended and the lights are out. Will you forgive me if I say in the tersest terms possible that some of the men in this country have to forge and to swindle and to perjure to pay for their wives' dresses? I will say it, whether you forgive me or not.

Again, inordinate fashion is the foe of all Christian alms-giving. Men and women put so much in personal display that they often have nothing for God and the cause of suffering humanity. A Christian man cracking his Palais Royal glove across the back by shutting up his hand to hide the one cent he puts into the poor-box! A Christian woman, at the story of the Hottentots, crying copious tears into a twenty-five dollar handkerchief, and then giving a two-cent piece to the collection, thrusting it down under the bills so people will not know but it was a ten-dollar gold piece! One hundred dollars for incense to fashion. Two cents for God. God gives us ninety cents out of every dollar. The other ten cents by command of His Bible belong to Him. Is not God liberal according to this tithing system laid down in the Old Testament—is not God liberal in giving us ninety cents out of a dollar, when he takes but ten? We do not like that. We want to have ninety-nine cents for ourselves and one for God.

Now, I would a great deal rather steal ten cents from you than God. I think one reason why a great many people do not get along in worldly accumulation faster is because they do not observe this divine rule. God says: "Well, if that man is not satisfied with ninety cents of a dollar, then I will take the whole dollar, and I will give it to the man or woman who is honest with me." The greatest obstacle to charity in the Christian church to-day is the fact that men expend so much money on their table, and women so much on their dress, they have got nothing left for the work of God and the world's betterment. In my first settlement at Belleville, New Jersey, the cause of missions was being presented one Sabbath, and a plea for the charity of the people was being made, when an old Christian man in the audience lost his balance, and said right out in the midst of the sermon: "Mr. Talmage, how are we to give liberally to these grand and glorious causes when our families dress as they do?" I did not answer that question. It was the only time in my life when I had nothing to say.



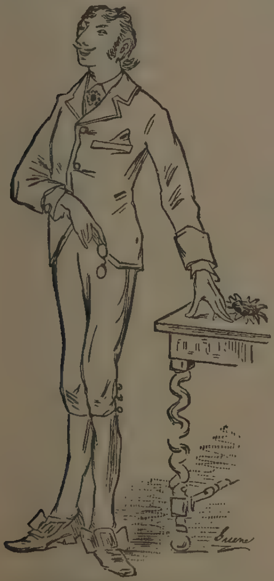
WHAT A LOVE OF A BONNET.

Again, inordinate fashion is distraction to public worship. You know very well there are a good many people who come to church just as they go to the races, to see who will come out first. What a flutter it makes in church when some woman with extraordinary display of fashion comes in. "What a love of a bonnet!" says some one. "What a perfect fright!" say five hundred. For the most merciless critics in the world are fashion critics. Men and women with souls to be saved passing the hour in wondering where that man got his cravat, or what store that woman patronizes. In many of our churches the preliminary exercises are taken up with the discussion of wardrobes. It is pitiable. Is it not wonderful that the Lord does not strike the meeting-houses with lightning! What distraction of public worship! Dying men and women, whose bodies are soon to be turned into dust, yet before three worlds strutting like peacocks, the awful question of the soul's destiny submerged by the question of Creedmore polonaise, and navy blue velvet and long fan train skirt, long enough to drag up the church aisle, the husband's store, office, shop, factory, fortune, and the admiration of half the people in the building. Men and women come late to church to show their clothes. People sitting down in a pew or taking up a hymn book, all absorbed at the same time in personal array, to sing:

"Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings.
  Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things,
  Toward heaven, thy native place!"

I adopt the Episcopalian prayer and say: "Good Lord, deliver us!"

Insatiate fashion also belittles the intellect. Our minds are enlarged or they dwindle just in proportion to the importance of the subject on which we constantly dwell. Can you imagine anything more dwarfing to the human intellect than the study of fashion? I see men on the street who, judging from their elaboration, I think must have taken two hours to arrange their apparel. After a few years of that kind of absorption, which one of McAllister's magnifying glasses will be powerful enough to make the man's character visible? What will be left of a woman's intellect after giving years and years to the discussion of such questions as the comparison between knife-pleats and box-pleats, and borderings of grey fox fur or black martin, or the comparative excellence of circulars of repped Antwerp silk lined with blue fox fur or with Hudson Bay sable? They all land in idiocy. I have seen men at the summer watering-places, through fashion the mere wreck of what they once were. Sallow of cheek. Meager of limb. Hollow at the chest. Showing no animation save in rushing across a room to pick up a lady's fan. Simpering along the corridors, the same compliments they simpered twenty years ago. A New York lawyer last summer at United States Hotel, Saratoga, within our hearing, rushed across a room to say to a sensible woman, "You are as sweet as peaches!" The fools of fashion are myriad. Fashion not only destroys the body, but it makes idiotic the intellect.


THE SIMPERING MAN.

Yet, my friends, I have given you only the milder phase of this evil. It shuts a great multitude out of heaven. The first peal of thunder that shook Sinai declared: "Thou shalt have no other God before me," and you will have to choose between the goddess of fashion and the Christian God. There are a great many seats in heaven, and they are all easy seats, but not one seat for the devotee of fashion. Heaven is for meek and quiet spirits. Heaven is for those who think more of their souls than of their bodies. Heaven is for those who have more joy in Christian charity than in dry-goods religion. Why, if you with your idolatry of fashion should somehow get into heaven, you would be for putting a French roof on the "house of many mansions," and making plaits and Hamburg embroidery and flounces in the robes, and you would be for introducing the patterns of Butterick's *Quarterly Delineator.* Give up this idolatry of fashion, or give up heaven. What would you do standing beside the Countess of Huntington, whose joy it was to build chapels for the poor, or with that Christian woman of Boston, who fed fifteen hundred children of the street at Faneuil Hall on New Year's Day, giving out as a sort of doxology at the end of the meeting a pair of shoes to each one of them; or those Dorcases of modern society who have consecrated their needles to the Lord, and who will get eternal reward for every stitch they take. O! men and women, give up the idolatry of fashion. The rivalries and the competitions of such a life are a stupendous wretchedness. You will always find some one with brighter array and with more palatial residence, and with lavender kid gloves that make a tighter fit. And if you buy this thing and wear it you will wish you had bought something else and worn it. And the frets of such a life will bring the crows' feet to your temples before they are due, and when you come to die you will have a miserable time. I have seen men and women of fashion die, and I never saw one of them die well. The trappings off, there they lay on the tumbled pillow, and there were just two things that bothered them—a wasted life and a coming eternity. I could not pacify them, for their body, mind, and soul had been exhausted in the worship of fashion, and they could not appreciate the gospel. When I knelt by their bedside they were mumbling out their regrets and saying, "O God! O God!" Their garments hung up in the wardrobe, never again to be seen by them. Without any exception, so far as my memory serves me, they died without hope, and went into eternity unprepared. The two most ghastly death-beds on earth are, the one where a man dies of delirium tremens, and the other where a woman dies after having sacrificed all her faculties of body, mind and soul in the worship of fashion. My friends, we must appear in judgment to answer for what we have worn on our bodies as well as for what repentances we have exercised with our souls. On that day I see coming in, Beau Brummel of the last century, without his cloak, like which all England got a cloak; and without his cane, like which all England got a cane; without his snuff-box, like which all England got a snuff-box—he, the fop of the ages, particular about everything but his morals; and Aaron Burr, without the letters that down to old age he showed in pride, to prove his early wicked gallantries; and Absalom without his hair; and Marchioness Pompadour without her titles; and Mrs. Arnold, the belle of Wall street, when that was the center of fashion, without her fripperies of vesture.

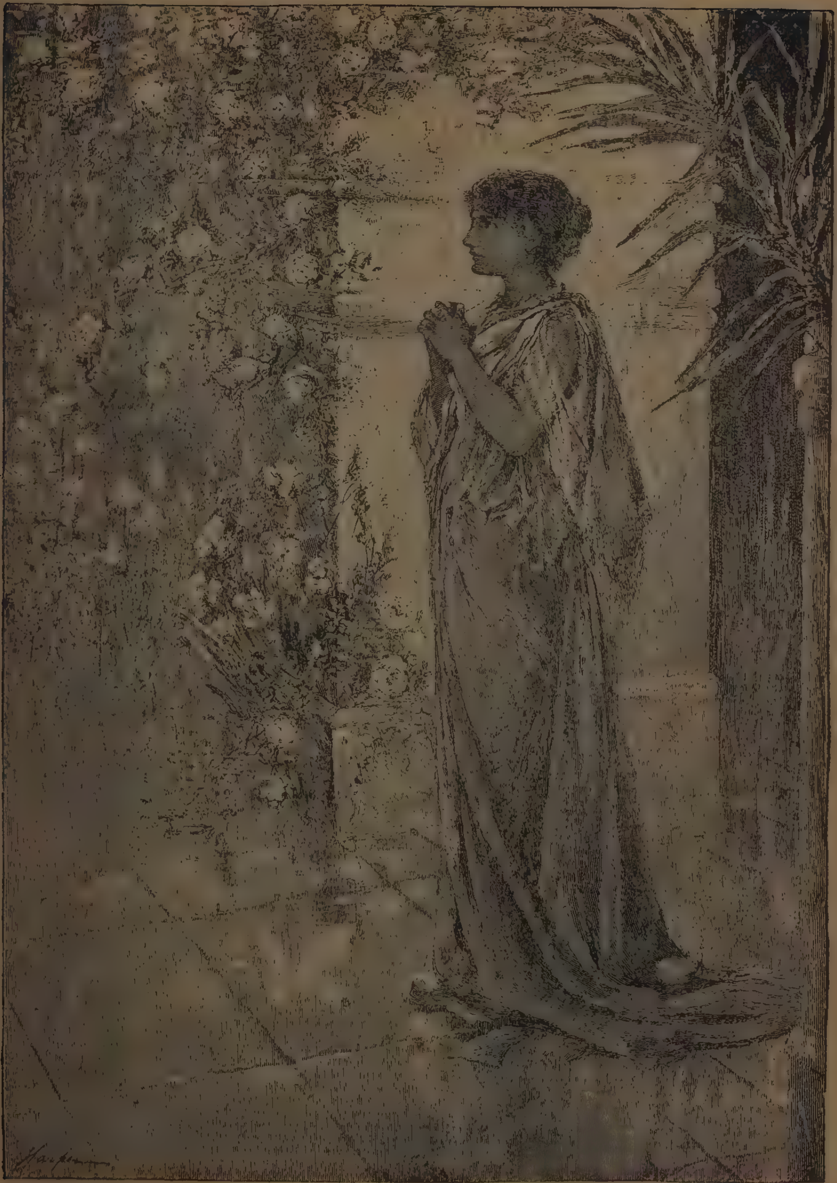
And in great haggardness they shall go away into eternal expatriation; while among the queens of heavenly society will be found Vashti, who wore the modest veil before the palatial bacchanalians; and Hannah, who annually made a little coat for Samuel at the temple; and Grandmother Lois, the ancestress of Timothy, who imitated her virtue; and Mary, who gave Jesus Christ to the world; and many of you, the wives and mothers and sisters and daughters of the present Christian Church, who through great tribulation are entering into the kingdom of God. Christ announced who would make up the royal family of heaven when he said, "Whosoever doeth the will of God, the same is my brother, my sister, my mother."

CHAPTER XIX.

EXTRAVAGANCE OF MODERN SOCIETY.

Isaiah describes the voluptuousness of an ancient city—the description, with a very little variation, is as appropriate to New York, Brooklyn and Chicago as to Jerusalem and Tyre. One might think that he had had before him the fashion-plates, and the head-dresses, and the jewel-caskets, and the dancing-schools, and the drawing-room parties of the present day, and that he foresaw Saratoga and Brighton and Long Branch. Through this same description we also see the masculine extravagance and dissipation which always correspond with the feminine. Women may have greater varieties of apparel, but she lives a quieter life, and, therefore, may have the great varieties and luxuries of dress without impediment. Men would wear as much, if they knew how without interfering with their wordly occupations. The rough jostling of life is inimical to a man's dragging a dress-trail two yards in length, or pending from his ear a diamond cluster. In the old time, as well as in all ages of the world, the two sexes were alike in moralities or immoralities. While in parlor sentimentalities it is well that men defer to women, and women defer to men, in the presence of God, and in the light of eternal responsibilities, the sexes are equal.

Isaiah takes us twenty-five hundred years back, and sets us down in an ancient city. It is a bright day, and the ladies are all out. The procession of men and women is moving up and down the gay streets. It is the height of the fashionable season. The sensible people move with so much modesty that they do not attract our attention. But here come the haughty daughters of Jerusalem. They lean for-



"IT IS THE SOUL SHINING THROUGH THE FACE."

ward; they lean very much forward; so far forward as to be

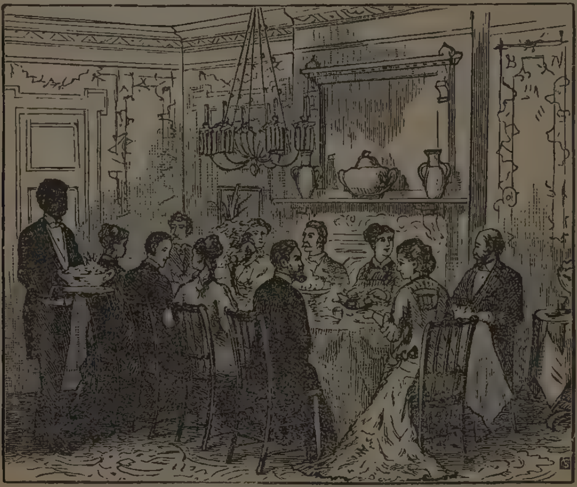
COAST OF TYRE.

unnatural—teetering, wobbling, wriggling, flirting, or, as he describes it, they "walk with stretched forth necks, walking and mincing as they go." They have spent hours before the mirror ere starting from home, and have in most astounding style arranged their bonnets and their veils and their entire apparel, and now go through the streets, taking more of the pavement than they are entitled to, sweeping along with skirts, "round tires like the moon." See! that is a princess! Look! that is a Damascus sword-maker! Look! that is a Syrian merchant! The jingling of the chains, and the flashing of the head-bands, and the exhibitions of universal swagger attract the attention of the prophet, and he brings his camera to bear upon the scene, and takes a picture for all the ages. But where is that scene? Vanished. Where are those gay streets? Vermin-covered population pass through them. Where are the hands, and the necks, and the foreheads, and the shoulders, and the feet that sported all that magnificence? Ashes! Ashes!

I am going to write of the God-defying extravagance of modern society. For the refinements and the elegancies and adornments of life, I cast my vote. While I was thinking over this subject, there was handed into my house a basket of flowers, paradisiacal in their beauty. White-calla with a green background of begonia; heliotropes nestling among geraniums; sepal, corolla, and perianth showed the touch of God's fingers. In the snow of the camellia, in the fire-dye of the rose, in the sky-blue of the English violet, I learned that God loves adornment. He might have made this earth so as to satisfy the gross demands of sense, but left it without adornment or attraction. Instead of the variegated colors of the season, the earth might have worn a dress of unchanging dull brown. The trees might have put forth their fruit without the prophesy of leaf or blossom. Niagara might have let down its waters in gradual descent without thunder and winged spray. But no. Look out, on some summer morning, after a heavy night-dew, and see whether or not God loves jewels. Put a snow-flake under a microscope, and see whether God does not love exquisite architecture. He decreed that the breast-plate of the priest in olden time should have a wreath of gold, and the hem of his garment should be worked in to figures of pomegranate. When the world sleeps God blankets it with the brilliants of the night sky, and when it wakes he washes it in the burnished laver of the sunrise.

But it is absolutely necessary that we draw a line between that which is the lawful use of beautiful adornment and that extravagance which is the source of so much crime, wretchedness and abomination in our day. That is sinful extravagance when you go into anything beyond your means. That which is right for one may be wrong for another. That which is lawful expense for a queen may be sinful outlay for a duchess. That which may be economy for you with larger income may be squandering for me with smaller income. But when men and women cross over the line which separates between what they can pay for, and still keep a sufficiency to meet moral obligation on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that extravagance which one's means cannot compass, they have passed from the innocent into the culpable. Across that line have gone "a multitude that no man can number."

We judge of what we ought to have by what other people have. If they have a sumptuous table, and fine residence, and gay turn-out, and exquisite apparel, and brilliant surroundings, we must have them, irrespective of our capacity to stand the expense. We throw ourselves down in despair because other people have a seal-skin coat, and we have an ordinary one; because others have diamonds, and we have garnets; because others have Axminster, and we have Brussels; because others have lambrequins, and we have plain curtains. What others have we mean to have anyhow. So there are families hardly able to pay their rent, and in debt to every merchant in the neighborhood, who sport apparel inapt for their circumstances, and run so near the shore that the first misfortune in business or the first besiegement of sickness tosses them into pauperism. There are thousands of families moving from neighborhood to neighborhood, staying long enough in each one to exhaust all their capacity to get trusted. They move away because the druggists will give them no more medicine, and the butchers will afford them no more meat, and the bakers will give them no more bread, and the grocers will furnish them no more sugar until they pay up. Then they suddenly find out that the neighborhood is unhealthy, and they hire a cartman, whom they never pay, to take them to a part of the city where all the druggists and butchers and bakers and grocers will be glad to see them come in, and send to them the best rounds of beef, and the best coffee, and the best of everything, until the slight suspicion comes into their brain that all the pay they will ever get from their customer is the honor of his society. There are about five thousand such



"A SUMPTUOUS TABLE."—PAGE 263.

thieves in Brooklyn. You see I call it by a plain name, because when a man buys a thing that he does not expect to pay for he is a thief.

There are circumstances where men can not meet their obligations. It is as honest for some men to fail as it is for other men to succeed. They do their best, and through the misfortunes of life they are thrown, and they can not pay their debts. That is one thing; but when you go and purchase an article for which you know there is no probability of your ever making recompense, you are a villain! Why don't you save the time of the merchant, and the expense of an accountant for him? Why don't you go down some day to his store, and when no one is looking, shoulder the ham and the spare-rib, and in modest silence take them along with you? That would be a lesser crime; for now you get not only the merchant's goods, but you get his time, and you rouse up his expectations. If you must steal, steal so it will be the least possible damage to the trader. John Randolph arose in the American Senate, and stretching himself up to full height, cried out, with a shrill voice: "Mr. Chairman, I have found the philosopher's stone that turns everything into gold: Pay as you go."

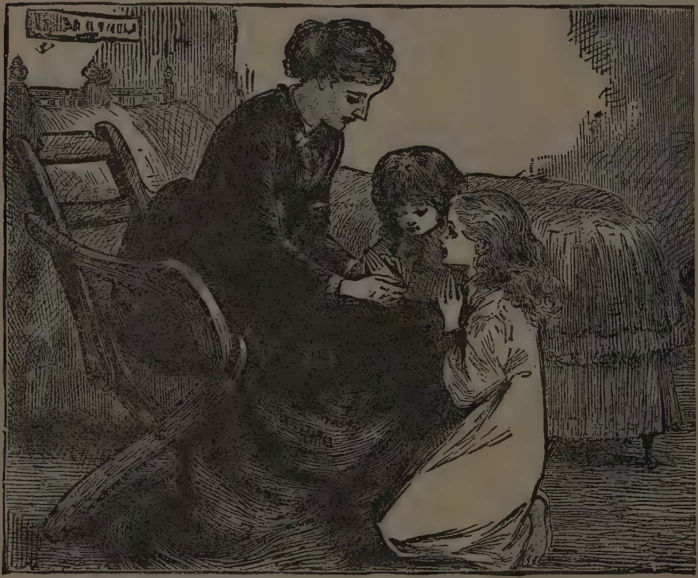
Society has to be reconstructed on this subject. You have no right to ride in a carriage when you owe the wheelright who furnished the landau, and the horse-dealer who provided the blooded span, and the harness-maker who caparisoned the gay steeds, and the livery-man who furnished the stabling, and the driver who sits with rosetted hat on your coach-box. I am glad to see you ride. The finer your horses and the better your carriage the better it pleases me. But if you are in debt for the equipage, and hopelessly in debt, get down and walk like the rest of us. It is well to understand that it is not the absolute necessities that we find it so hard to meet but the fictitious wants. God promises us shelter, but not a palace; and raiment, but not chinchilla; and food, but not canvas-back duck. As long as we have enough to meet the positive necessities of life, we ought to be content until we can afford the superfluities. As soon as you see a man deliberately consent that his outgo shall exceed his income, you may know he has started on the broad road to bankruptcy and moral ruin. The young man who came from the oil wells in Pennsylvania, having gained a sudden fortune of two millions of dollars, and then ran through the whole of it in less than two years, illustrated on a large scale what some of you are doing on a small scale.

This wholesale extravagance accounts for a great deal of depression in national finances. Aggregates are made up of units, and so long as one half the people of this country are in debt to the other half, you can not have a healthy financial condition. The national resources are drawn off, not only for useless extravagances, but for those that are positively pernicious. The theaters of New York cost that city every year two millions of dollars. We spend in this country one hundred millions of dollars every year for cigars and tobacco. In the United States we expend annually one thousand four hundred and eighty-three millions of dollars for rum. Now, take those facts, and is it strange that our national finances are crazed? If you have an exportation of breadstuffs four times what you have now, and an importation of gold four times what you have now, there would be no permanent prosperity in this country until people quit their sinful lavishment, and learn honest economy. You charge it upon Salmon P. Chase, or Boutwell, or other Secretaries. I charge it upon you, the men and women who are living beyond your means.

This wide-spread extravagance also accounts for much of the crime. It is the source of many abscondings, bankruptcies, defalcations and knaveries. The store on Broadway and the office on Wall street are swamped by the residence on Madison square. The husband and father has his craft capsized because he carries too much sail of point-lace and Antille guipure. That is what destroyed Ketchum, and Swartwout, and ten thousand men not so famous. That is what springs the leak in the merchant's money-till, and pulls down your trust companies, and cracks the pistols of your suicides, and halts this nation on its high career of prosperity. I arraign this monster of extravagance in the sight of all the people, and ask you to pelt it with your scorn and denounce it with your anathema.

This wide-spread extravagance also accounts for much of the pauperism in the country. Who are the individuals and the families who are thrown on your charity? Who has sinned against them so that they suffer? It is often the case that their parents, or their grand parents, had all luxuries, lived everything up, more than lived everything up, and then died, leaving their families in want. The grand parents of these beggars supped on Burgundy and woodcock. There are a great many families who have every luxury in life, yet expend every dollar that comes in, and perhaps a few dollars more, not even taking the common Christian prudence of having their lives insured. While they live all is well, but when they die their children are pitched into the street. I tell you a man has no right to die under such circumstances. It is grand larceny, even his death. If a man has been industrious and economical, and has not a farthing to leave his children as he goes away from them, he has a right to put them in the hands of the Father of the Fatherless, and know they will be cared for; but if you, with every comfort in life, are lavish and improvident, and then depart this life leaving your children to be hurled into pauperism, you deserve to have your bones sold to the medical museum for anatomical specimens, the proceeds to furnish your children bread. Some of you are making a great swash in life, and after a while will die, leaving your families beggars, and you will expect us ministers of the Gospel to come and stand by your coffin, and lie about your excellencies; but we will not do it. If you send for me, I will tell you what my text will be: "He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, is worse than an infidel."

In this day, God has mercifully allowed those of us who have limited income to make provision for our families, through the great life insurance companies all over the land. By some self-denial on our part, we can make this provision for those whom we shall leave behind us. Is there anything so helpless as a woman whose husband has just died, when, with children at her back, she goes out in this day to fight for bread? Shall she become a menial servant in some one else's household? No; not the one that has been lying on your arm all these years, and filling the household with joy



THE PROVIDENT FATHER.

and light. Shall she sew for a living? God knows that they get but six cents and eight cents for making one garment. Ah no! you had better have your coffin made large enough to take them all with you to that land where they never freeze nor starve. How a man with no surplus of estate, but still enough money to pay the premium on a life insurance policy, can refuse to do it, and then look his children in the face, and say his prayers at night on going to bed, expecting them to be answered, is a mystery to me that I have never yet been able to fathom.

This extravagance is becoming more and more widespread. A statistician has estimated that there are in New York and Brooklyn four thousand five hundred women who expend annually two thousand dollars each in dress. It is no rare thing when the wedding march sounds to see dragging through the aisle a bridal dress that has cost its thousand or fifteen hundred dollars. Things have come to such a pass that when we cry over sin we wipe the tears away with a hundred-and-fifty dollar pocket-handkerchief. The tendency to extravagance was illustrated wonderfully when James Fisk, jun., sent the bridal presents to the home of William M. Tweed. Fisk sent an iceberg of frosted silver, polar bears of silver lying down on the handles, polar bears of silver walking over the gold spoons. There were in the house that day forty silver sets of imperial magnificence. There was a diamond set that cost forty-five thousand dollars. There was one dress that had in it thirty-seven yards of silk, with three hundred and eighty-two bows. Hundreds of thousands of dollars expended on that scene. The reason we have not a multitude of scenes as extravagant is because we have not so much money.

This wicked extravagance shows itself no more forcibly than on the funeral day. No one else seems willing to speak of it, so I shall. There has been many a man who has died solvent, but has been insolvent before he got under the ground. One would think that the two debts most sacred would be debts to the physician and the undertaker, since they are the last two debts contracted; and yet those two professions are swindled more frequently than any other. In the agitation and excitement the friends come, and they want extraordinary attention, and they want extraordinary expenditure, and then, when the sad scene is past, neglect to make compensation. What are those two professions to do under such circumstances? If a merchant sells goods, and they are not paid for, I understand he can reclaim the goods; but if a man departs this life, and through his friends, indebtedness is contracted that is not met, there seems to be no relief, for the patient has gone off with the doctor's pills and the undertaker's white slippers. Greenwood and Laurel Hill and Mount Auburn hold to-day thousands of such swindles.

A man dies. He has lived a fictitious life, moved amidst splendor, and dies leaving his family not a dollar; but they, poor things! must keep up the same magnificence, and so they resolve upon a great funeral. The obsequies shall be splendid! The expense is nearly two thousand dollars for getting one poor mortal to his last home! Perhaps it would have been all well if they had been able to meet the expenditure; but when it was known they could not, it was a villainy. There are families that you know who, in the effort to meet the ridiculous, outrageous, and wicked customs of society in regard to obsequies, have actually reduced themselves to penury. They put their last dollar in the ground. There is in England what they call a funeral reform. It is high time we had such a reform society in our own country.

This wide-spread extravagance accounts, also, for the poverty of religious institutions. Men pay so much for show they have nothing for God and religion. We pay in this country twenty-two millions of dollars for the great benevolent societies; but what are twenty-two millions of dollars compared with the one hundred millions for cigars and tobacco, and the one thousand four hundred and eighty-three millions for drink? How do you like the comparison? Great lavishment for the world; great niggardliness for God.

Let us set ourselves in battle array against this God-defying extravagance. Buy not those things which are frivolous, when you may after a while be in lack of the necessities. Buy not books you will never read, nor pictures you will never study. Put not a whole month's wages into one trinket. Keep your credit good by seldom or never asking for any. Pay. Starve not a whole year so as to be able to afford one Belshazzar carnival. Do not buy a coat of many colors, and then in six months be out at the elbows. Do not pay so much for a muffler for the neck, and be almost bare-footed. Flourish not, as some I know of, in elegant hotels with drawing-room apartments, and then vanish in the night, not even leaving your compliments for the landlord.

In the great day, we will have to give an account not only for how we made our money, but for how we spent it. When so many are suffering, and there is want before us and want behind us and want on either side of us, let us quit our waste. Men and women of God, I call upon you to set a Christian example. Remember that soon you will have to leave your wardrobe and equipage. I do not want you to feel on that day like the dying actress, who ordered up her casket of jewels, and then with her pale, dying hand rolled them over, and said, "Alas! that I must give you up so soon." In that day, better have one treasure in heaven, just one, than to have had the bridal trousseau of a Queen Maria Louisa, or to have sat with Caligula at a banquet which cost four hundred thousand dollars, or to have been carried out in a pageant with senators and princes for pall-bearers. They who consecrate to God their time, their talents, and their all, shall be held in everlasting remembrance, while the name of the wicked shall rot.

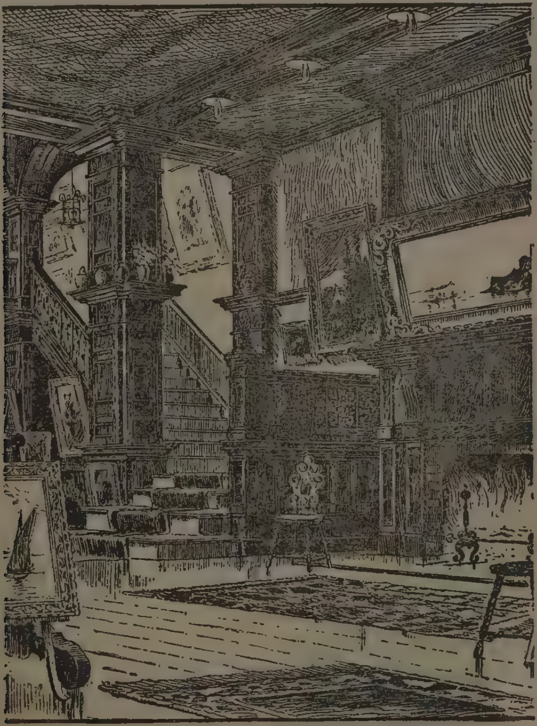
CHAPTER XX.

CLUBS.

I am asked, What is the influence of club-houses in America? Men are gregarious. Cattle in herds. Birds in flocks. Fish in schools. The human race in social circles. You may by discharge of gun scatter the flock of quails, and you may by plunge of the anchor send apart the denizens of the deep; but they will re-assemble. And if by some power you could scatter all the present associations of men, they would again re-assemble. Herbs and flowers prefer to stand in associations. You plant a forget-me-not or a heart's-ease away up alone on the hillside, and it will soon hunt up some other heart's-ease or forget-me-not. You find the herbs talking to each other in the morning dew. A galaxy of stars is a mutual life insurance company. Once in a while you find a man unsympathetic and alone, and like a ship's mast, ice-glazed, which the most agile sailor could not climb; but the most of men have in their nature a thousand roots and a thousand branches, and they blossom all the way to the top, and the fowls of heaven sing amid the branches. Because of this we have communities and societies—some for the kindling of mirth, some for the raising of sociality, some for the advance of a craft, some to plan for the welfare of the State—associations of artists, of merchants, of shipwrights, of carpenters, of masons, of plumbers, of plasterers, of lawyers, of doctors, of clergymen. Do you cry out against this? Then you cry out against a divine arrangement.

You might as well preach to a busy ant-hill or bee-hive against secret societies. In many of the ages people have gathered together in associations, characterized by the old, blunt

Saxon desigation of club. If you have read history, you know there were the King's Head Club, and the Ben Johnson Club, and the Brothers' Club—to which Swift and Bolingbroke belonged—and the Literary Club, which Burke and Goldsmith and Johnson and Boswell made immortal; and Jacobin Club, and Benjamin Franklin Junto Club, and others almost as celebrated and conspicuous. Some to advance arts, some to vindicate justice, some to promote good literature, some to destroy the body and blast the soul. In our own time we have many clubs. They are as different from each other as



RECEPTION ROOM, CHICAGO CLUB.

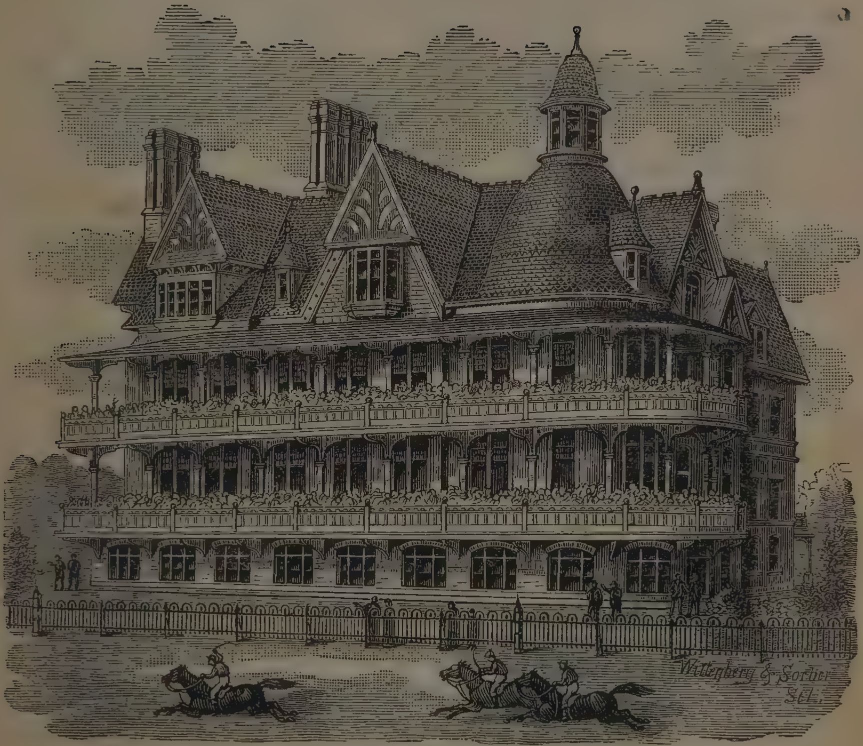
the day from the night. I might show you two specimens. Here is the imperial hallway. On this side is the parlor, with the upholstery of a Kremlin or a Tuileries. Here is a dining-room which challenges you to mention any luxury it cannot afford. Here is an art gallery with pictures and statues and drawings from the best of artists—Bierstadt and Church and Cole and Powers — pictures for all moods, impassioned or placid—Sheridan's Ride and Farmers at their Nooning. Shipwreck and Sunlight over the Seas. Foaming deer with the hounds after it in the Adirondacks. Sheep asleep on the hill-side. And here are reading-rooms with the finest of magazines, and libraries with all styles of books, from hermeneutics to fairy tale. Men go there for ten minutes or for many hours. Some come from beautiful and happy home circles for a little while that they may enter into these club-house socialities. Others come from dismembered households, and while they have humble lodgings elsewhere, find their chief joy here. One blackball amid ten votes will defeat a man's membership. For rowdyism and gambling and drunkenness and every style of misdemeanor a man is immediately dropped. Brilliant club-house from top to bottom—the chandeliers, the plate, the literature, the social prestige a complete enchantment.

Here is another club house. You open the door, and the fumes of strong drink and tobacco are something almost intolerable. You do not have to ask what those young men are doing, for you can see by the flushed cheek and intent look and almost angry way of tossing the dice and dropping the chips, they are gambling. That is an only son seated there at another table. He has had all art, all culture, all refinement showered upon him by his parents. That is the way he is paying them for their kindness. That is a young married man. A few months ago he made promises of fidelity and kindness, every one of which he has broken. Around a table in the club-house there is a group telling vile stories. It is getting late now, and three-fourths of the members of the club are intoxicated. It is between twelve and one o'clock, and after a while it is time to shut up. The conversation has got to be grovelling, base, filthy, outrageous. Time to shut up. The young men saunter forth, those who can walk, and balance themselves against the lamp-post or the fence. A young man not able to get out has a couch extemporized for him in the club-house, or by two comrades not quite so overcome by strong drink, he is led to his father's house, and the door-bell rung, and these two imbecile escorts usher into the front hall the ghastliest thing ever ushered into a father's house—a drunken son. There are dissipating club-houses, which would do well if they could make a contract with Inferno to furnish ten thousand men a year, and do that for twenty years, on the condition that no more would be asked of them. They would save—the dissipating club-houses of this country would save—hundreds of homesteads, and bodies, minds, and souls innumerable. The ten thousand they furnish a year by contract would be small when compared with the vaster multitudes they furnish without contract. But I make a vast difference between the club houses. I have during my life belonged to four clubs—a baseball club, a theological club, and two literary clubs. They were to me physical recuperation, mental food, moral health.

Now, what is the principle by which we are to judge in regard to the profitable or baleful influence of a club-house? That is the practical and the eternal question which hundreds of men to-day are settling. First, I would have you test your club-house by the influence it has upon your home, if you have a home. I have been told by a prominent member of one of the clubs that three fourths of the members are married men. That wife has lost her influence with her husband who takes every evening's absence as an assault upon domesticity. How are the great enterprises of art and literature and education and public weal to go on if every man has his world bounded by his front doorstep on one side and his back window on the other, his thoughts rising no higher than his own attic, going down no deeper than his own cellar? When a wife objects to a husband's absence for some elevating purpose, she breaks her scepter of conjugal power. There should be no protest on the part of the wife if the husband goes forth to some practical, useful, honorable mission. But, alas! for the fact that so many men sacrifice all home-life for the club-house. I have in my house the roll of the members of many of the clubs of our great cities, and I could point you to the names of many who have committed this awful sacrilege. Genial as angels at the club-house, ugly as sin at home. Generous to a fault for all wine suppers and yachts and horse races, but stingy about the wife's dress and the children's shoes. That which might have been a healthful recreation has become a usurpation of his affections, and he has married it and he is guilty of moral bigamy.

Under that process, whatever be the wife's features, she becomes uninteresting and homely. He criticises everything about her. He does not like her dress, he does not like the way she arranges her hair, he cannot see how he ever was so unromantic as to offer his hand and heart. It is all the time talk about money, money, money, when she ought to be talking about Dexters and Derby Days and English drags, with six horses all under control of one ribbon. There are hundreds of homes being clubbed to death.

Membership in some of these clubs always means domestic shipwreck. Tell me a man has become a member of a certain club, and tell me nothing more about him for ten years, and I will write his accurate biography. By that time he is a wine-guzzler, and his wife is broken-hearted or prematurely old, and his property is lost or reduced, and his home is a mere name in a directory.


Wittenberg & Sorber
St.L.

ST. LOUIS JOCKEY CLUB HOUSE.

Another test by which you may try a club-house, is the question, What is the influence of that institution upon one's secular occupation? I can see how through a club-house men may advance their commercial interests. I have friends who have formed their best mercantile relations through such institutions. But what has been the influence of the one with which you are connected upon your worldly credit? Are people more cautious now how they let you have goods? Before you joined the club was your credit with the commercial agency, A 1? and has it gone clear down in the scale? Then beware! We every day hear the going to pieces of commercial establishments through the dissipations of some club-house libertine or club house drunkard who has wasted his estate, and wasted the estates of others. The fortune is beaten to pieces with the ball-player's bat, or cut amidship by the prow of a regatta, or falls under the sharp hoof of the fast horse, or is drowned in the potions of Cognac and Monongahela. The man's club house was the Loch Earn, his occupation was the Ville du Havre. They struck on the high seas, and the Ville du Havre went under.

Another test by which you may try all the club-houses is the question. What influence will that institution have upon my sense of moral and spiritual obligation? Now, here are two roads into the future, the Christian and the unchristian, the safe and the unsafe. Any institution or any association that confuses my idea in regard to that fact is a bad institution and a bad association. I had prayers before I joined the club. Did I have them after? I attended the house of God before I connected myself with the club. Since that union with the club do I absent myself from religious influences? Which would you rather have in your hand when you come to die, a pack of cards or a Bible? Which would you rather have pressed to your lips in the closing moment, the cup of Belshazzarean wassail or the chalice of Christian communion? Who would you rather have for your pall-bearers, the elders of a Christian church, or the companions whose conversation was full of slang and innuendo? Who would you rather have for your eternal companions, those men who spend their evenings betting, gambling, swearing, carousing, and telling vile stories, or your little child, that bright girl whom the Lord took?

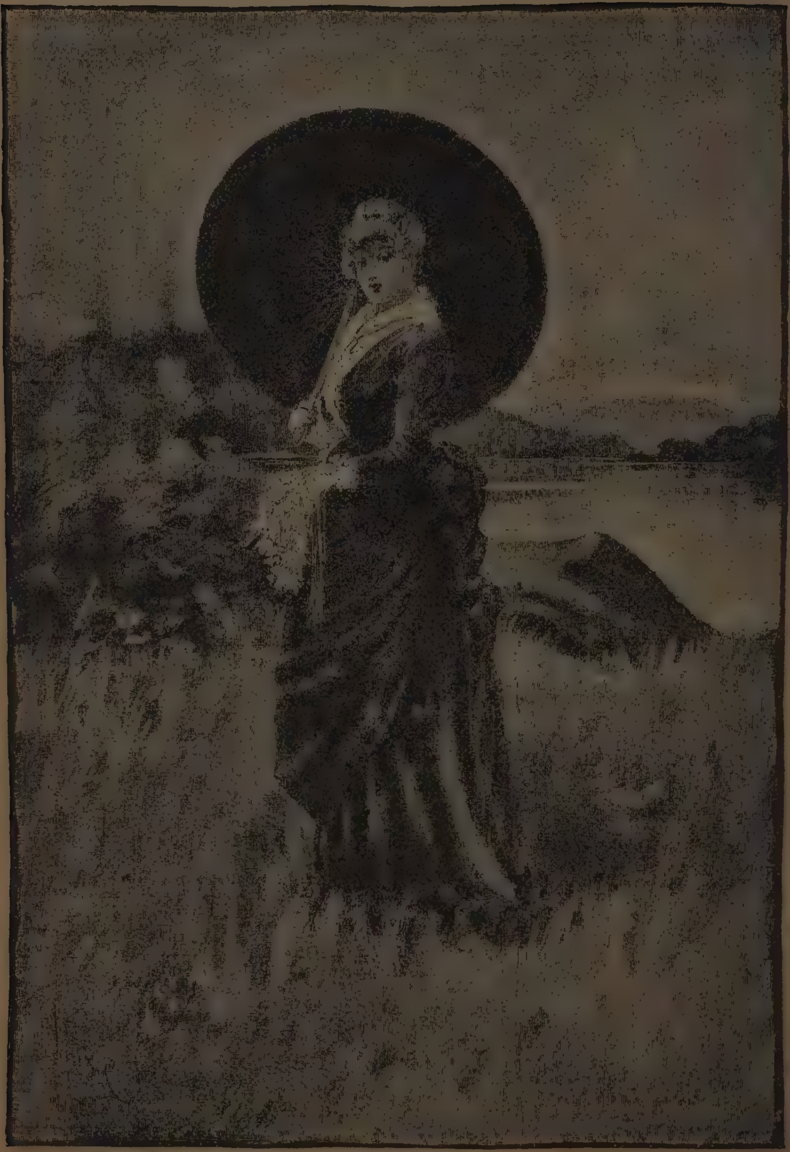
Let me say to fathers who are becoming dissipated, your sons will follow you. You think your son does not know. He knows all about it. I have heard men who say, "I am profane, but never in the presence of my children." Your children know you swear. I have heard men say, "I drink, but never in the presence of my children." Your children know you drink. I describe now what occurs in hundreds of households in this country. The tea-hour has arrived. The family are seated at the tea-table. Before the rest of the family arise from the table, the father shoves back his chair, says he has an engagement, lights a cigar, goes out, comes back after midnight, and that is the history of three hundred and sixty-five nights of the year. Does any man want to stultify himself by saying that that is healthy, that that is right, that that is honorable? Would your wife have married you with such prospects?

Time will pass on, and the son will be sixteen or seventeen years of age, and you will be at the tea-table, and he shove back and have an engagement, and he will light his cigar, and he will go out to the club-house, and you will hear nothing of him until you hear the night key in the door after midnight, But his physical constitution is not quite as strong as yours, and the liquor he drinks is more terriffically drugged than that which you drink, and so he will catch up with you on the road to death, though you got such a long start of him, and so you will both go to hell together.

The revolving Drummond light in front of a hotel, in front of a locomotive, may flash this way, and flash that, upon the mountains, upon the ravines, upon the city; but I take the lamp of God's eternal truth, and I flash it upon all the club-houses of these cities, so that no young man shall be deceived. By these tests try them, try them! Oh, leave the dissipating influences of the club-room, if the influences of your club-room are dissipating! Paid your money, have you? Better sacrifice that than your soul. Good fellows, are they? Under that process they will not remain such. Mollusca may be found two hundred fathoms down beneath the Norwegian seas; Siberian stag get fat on the stunted growth of Altain peaks; Hedysarium grows amid the desolation of Sahara; tufts of osier and birch grow on the hot lips of volcanic Sneehattan; but a pure heart and an honest life thrive in a dissipating club-house—never!

The way to conquer a wild beast is to keep your eye on him, but the way for you to conquer your temptations, my friend, is to turn your back on them and fly for your life.

Oh, my heart aches! I see men struggling against evil habits, and they want help. I have knelt beside them, and I have heard them cry for help, and then we have risen, and he has put one hand on my right shoulder, and the other hand on my left shoulder, and looked into my face with an infinity of earnestness which the judgment day will have no power to make me forget, as he has cried out with his lips scorched in ruin, "God help me!" For such there is no help except in the Lord God Almighty. To His grace I commend you.



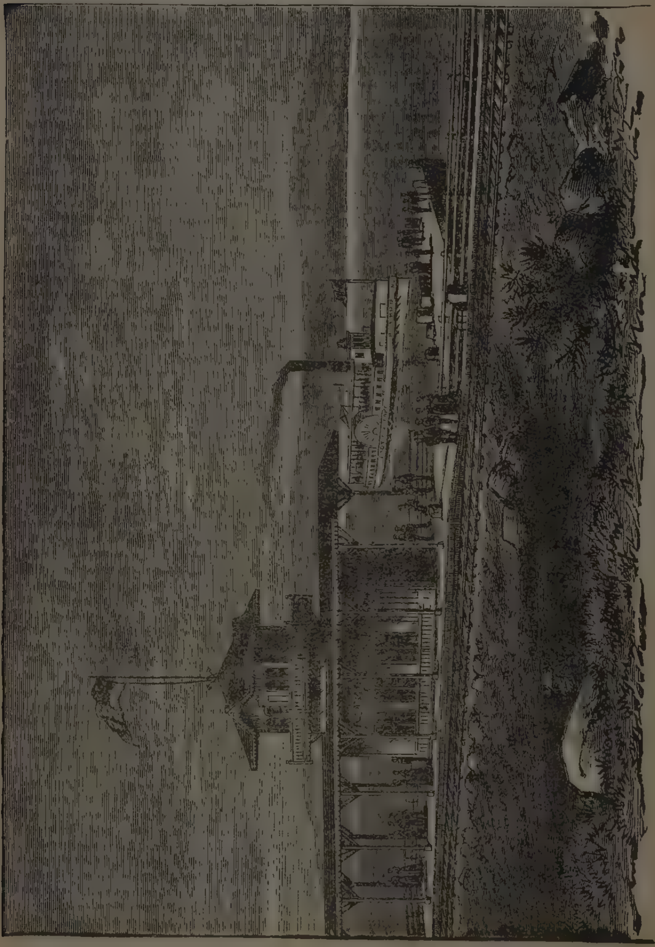
SUMMERING.

CHAPTER XXI.

WATERING-PLACES.

Outside of the city of Jerusalem, there was a sensitive watering-place, the popular resort for invalids. To this day, there is a dry basin of rock which shows that there must have been a pool there three hundred and sixty feet long, one hundred and thirty feet wide, and seventy-five feet deep. This pool was surrounded by five piazzas, or porches, or bathing-houses, where the patients tarried until the time when they were to step into the water. So far as reinvigoration was concerned, it must have been a Saratoga and a Long Branch on a small scale; a Leamington and a Brighton combined—medical and therapeutic. Tradition says that at a certain season of the year there was an officer of the government who would go down to that water and pour in it some healing quality, and after that the people would come and get the medication; but I prefer the plain statement of Scripture, that at a certain season, an angel came down and stirred up or troubled the water; and then the people came and got the healing. That angel of God that stirred up the Judean watering-place had his counterpart in the angel of healing that, in our day, steps into the mineral waters of Congress, or Sharon, or Sulphur Springs, or into the salt sea at Cape May and Nahant, where multitudes who are worn out with commercial and professional anxieties, as well as those who are afflicted with rheumatism, neuralgic, and splenetic diseases, go, and are cured by the thousands. These Bethesdas are scattered all up and down our country, blessed be God!

We are at a season of the year when railway trains are being laden with passengers and baggage on their way to the mountains, and the lakes, and the sea-shore. Multitudes of



LAKE WINNEPESAUKEE.

our citizens are packing their trunks for a restorative absence. The city heats are pursuing the people with torch and fear of sunstroke. The long silent halls of sumptuous hotels are all abuzz with excited arrivals. The crystalline surface of Winnepesaukee is shattered with the stroke of steamers laden with excursionists. The antlers of Adirondack deer rattle under the shot of city sportsmen. The trout make fatal snap at the hook of adroit sportsmen, and toss their spotted brilliance into the game basket. Soon the baton of the orchestral leader will tap the music-stand on the hotel green, and American life will put on festal array, and the rumbling of the tenpin alley, and the crack of the ivory balls on the green-baized billiard tables, and the jolting of the bar-room goblets, and the explosive uncorking of champagne bottles, and the whirl and the rustle of the ball-room dance, and the clattering hoofs of the race-courses, will attest that the season for the great American watering-places is fairly inaugurated. Music! Flute, and drum, and cornet-a-piston, and clapping cymbals, will wake the echoes of the mountains. Glad I am that fagged-out American life, for the most part, will have an opportunity to rest, and that nerves racked and destroyed will find a Bethesda.

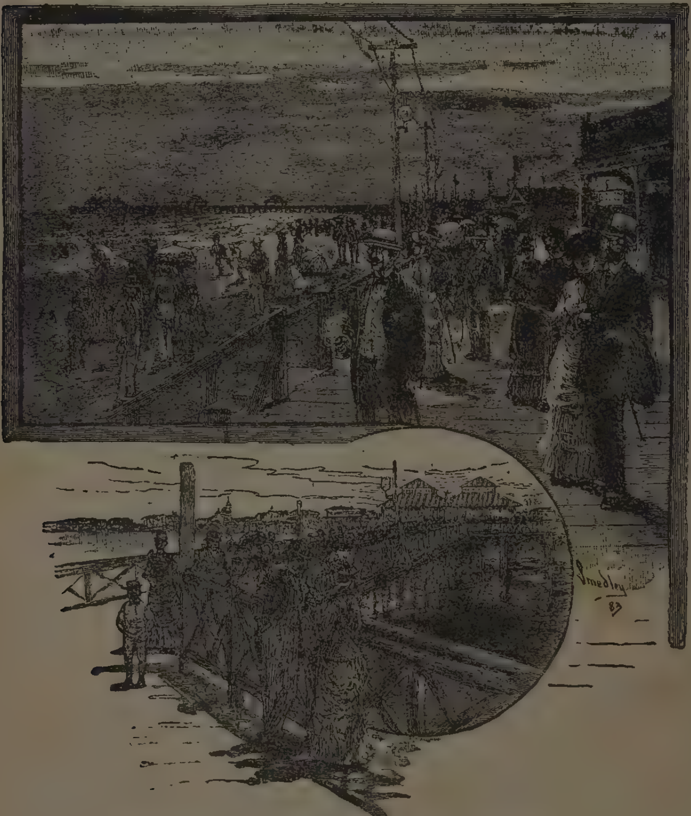
Let not the commercial firm begrudge the clerk, or the employer the journeyman, or the patient the physician, or the church its pastor, a season of inoccupation. Luther used to sport with his children; Edmund Burke used to caress his favorite horse; and the busy Christ said to the busy apostles: "Come ye apart awhile in the desert, and rest yourselves." And I have observed that they who do not know how to rest, do not know how to work.

But I have to declare this truth, that some of our fashionable watering-places are the temporal and eternal destruction of "a multitude that no man can number." I must utter a note of warning, plain, earnest and unmistakable. The first temptation that is apt to hover in this direction is to leave your piety all at home. You will send the dog, and cat, and canary-bird to be well cared for somewhere else; but the temptation will be to leave your religion in the room with the blinds down and the door bolted, and then you will come back in the autumn to find that it is starved and suffocated, lying stretched on the rug, stark dead. There is no surplus of piety at the watering-places. I never knew anyone to grow very rapidly in grace at the Catskill Mountain House, or Sharon Springs, or the Falls of Montmorency. It is generally the case that the Sabbath is more of a carousal than any other day, and there are Sunday walks, Sunday rides, and Sunday excursions. Elders and deacons and ministers of religion, who are entirely consistent at home, sometimes when the Sabbath dawns on them at Niagara Falls or the White Mountains, take the day to themselves. If they go to the church, it is apt to be a sacred parade, and the discourse, instead of being a plain talk about the soul, is apt to be what is called a crack sermon—that is, some discourse picked out of the effusions of the year as the one most adapted to excite admiration; and in those churches, from the way the ladies hold their fans, you know that they are not so much impressed with the heat as with the picturesqueness of half disclosed features. Four puny souls stand in the organ loft and squall a tune that nobody knows, and worshippers, with two thousand dollars worth of diamonds on the right hand, drop a cent into the poor-box, and then the benediction is pronounced, and the farce is ended.

The air is bewitched with the "world, the flesh and devil." There are Christians who, in three or four weeks in such a place, have had such terrible rents made in their Christian robe, that they had to keep darning it until Christmas to get it mended. The health of a great many people makes an annual visit to some mineral spring an absolute necessity; but take your Bible along with you, and take an hour for secret prayer every day, though you be surrounded by guffaw and saturnalia. Keep holy the Sabbath, though they deride you as a bigoted Puritan. Stand off from John

Morrissey's gambling hell and those other institutions which propose to imitate on this side the water the iniquities of Baden-Baden. Let your moral and immortal health keep pace with your physical recuperation and remember that all the waters of Hathorne, and sulphur and chalybeate springs cannot do you so much good as the mineral, healing, perennial flood that breaks forth from the "Rock of Ages." This may be your last summer. If so, make it a fit vestibule of heaven.

Another temptation hovering around nearly all our watering-places is the horse-racing business. We all admire the horse; but we do not think that its beauty or speed ought to be cultured at the expense of human degradation. The horse race is not of such importance as the human race. The Bible intimates that a man is better than a sheep, and I suppose he is better than a horse, though like Job's stallion, his neck be clothed with thunder. Horse-races in olden times were under the ban of Christian people; and in our day the same institution has come up under fictitious names. And it is called a "Summer Meeting," almost suggestive of positive religious exercises. And it is called an "Agricultural Fair," suggestive of everything that is improving in the art of farming. But under these deceptive titles are the same cheating, and the same betting, and the same drunkenness, and the same vagabondage, and the same abomination that were to be found under the old horse-racing system. I never knew a man yet who could give himself to the pleasures of the turf for a long reach of time and not be battered in morals. They hook up their spanking team, and put on their sporting cap, and take the reins and dash down the road to perdition! The great day at Saratoga, and Long Branch, and Atlantic City, and nearly all the other watering-places is the day of the races. The hotels are thronged, every kind of equipage is taken up at at an almost fabulous price; and there are many respectable people mingling with jockeys and gamblers and libertines and foul-mouthed men and flashy women. The bar-tender stirs up the brandy-smash. The bets run high. The greenhorns, supposing all is fair, put in their money soon enough to lose it. Three weeks before the race takes place the struggle is decided, and the men in the secret know on which steed to bet their money. The two men on the horses riding around, long ago arranged who shall win.



SCENES AT ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY.

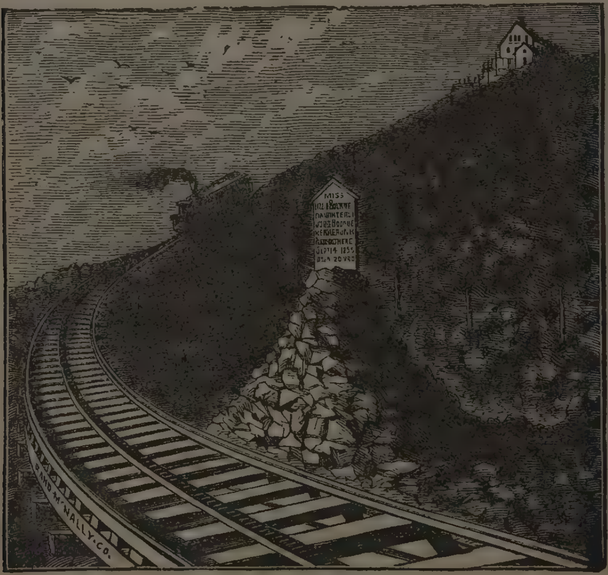
Leaning from the stand, or from the carriage, are men and women so absorbed in the struggle of bone and muscle and mettle, that they make a grand harvest for the pickpockets who carry off the pocketbooks and the portemonnaies. Men, looking on, see only two horses with two riders flying around the ring; but there is many a man on that stand whose honor and domestic happiness and fortune—white mane, white foot, white flank—are in the ring, racing with inebriety, and with fraud, and with profanity, and with ruin,—black neck, black foot, black flank. Neck and neck they go in that moral Epsom. White horse of honor; black horse of ruin. Death says: "I will bet on the black horse." Spectator says: "I will bet on the white horse." The white horse of honor a little way ahead. The black horse of ruin, Satan mounted, all the time gaining on him. Spectator breathless. Put on the lash. Dig in the spurs. There! They are past the stand. Sure. Just as I expected it. The black horse of ruin has won the race, and all the galleries of darkness "huzza! huzza!" and the devils come in to pick up their wagers. Have nothing to do with horse-racing dissipations. Long ago the English government got through looking to the turf for the dragoon and light cavalry horse. They found the turf depreciates the stock; and it is yet worse for men. Thomas Hughes, the member of Parliament, and the author known all the world over, hearing that a new turf enterprise was being started in this country, wrote a letter in which he said: "Heaven help you, then; for of all the cankers of our old civilization, there is nothing in this country approaching in unblushing meanness, in rascality holding its head high, to this belauded institution of the British turf." Another famous sportsman writes: "How many fine domains have been shared among these hosts of rapacious sharks during the last two hundred years; and unless the system be altered, how many more are doomed to fall into the same gulf!" The Duke of Hamilton, through his horse-racing proclivities, in three years got through his entire fortune of £70,000; and I will say that some of you are being undermined by it. With the bull-fights of Spain and the bear-baitings of the pit, may the Lord God annihilate the infamous and accursed horse-racing of England and America.

I go further and speak of another temptation that hovers over the watering place; and this is the temptation to sacrifice physical strength. The modern Bethesda was intended to recuperate the physical health; and yet how many come from the watering-places, their health absolutely destroyed; simpletons, boasting of having imbibed twenty glasses of Congress water before breakfast. Families, accustomed to going to bed at ten o'clock at night, gossiping until one or two o'clock in the morning. Dyspeptics, usually very cautious about their health, mingling ice-creams and lemons and lobster salads and cocoanuts, until the gastric juices lift up all their voices of lamentation and protest. Delicate women and brainless young men dancing themselves into vertigo and catalepsy. Thousands of men and women coming back from our watering-places in the autumn with the foundations laid for ailments that will last them all their life long. You know as well as I do that this is the simple truth. In the summer, you say to your good health: "Good-bye; I am going to have a gay time now for a little while; I will be very glad to see you again in the autumn." Then in the autumn, when you are hard at work in your office, or store, or shop, or counting-room, Good Health will come in and say, "Good-bye; I am going." You say: "Where are you going?" "Oh," says Good Health, "I am going to take a vacation." It is a poor rule that will not work both ways, and your good health will leave you choleric and splenetic and exhausted. You coquetted with your good health in the summer time, and your good health is coquetting with you in the winter time. A fragment of Paul's charge to the jailor would be an appropriate inscription for the hotel register in every watering-place: "Do thyself no harm."

Another temptation hovering around the watering-place is the formation of hasty and life-long alliances. The watering-places are responsible for more of the domestic infelicities of this country than all other things combined. Society is so artificial there that no sure judgment of character can be formed. They who form companionships amid such circumstances, go into a lottery where there are twenty blanks to one prize. In the severe tug of life you want more than glitter and splash. Life is not a ball-room, where the music decides the step, and bow, and prance, and graceful swing of long trail can make up for strong common sense. You might as well go among the gaily-painted yachts of a summer regatta to find war vessels, as to go among the light spray of the summer watering-place to find character that can stand the test of the great struggle of human life. Ah, in the battle of life you want a stronger weapon than a lace fan or a croquet mallet! The load of life is so heavy that in order to draw it you want a team stronger than one made up of a masculine grasshopper and a feminine butterfly. If there is any man in the community that excites my contempt, and that ought to excite the contempt of every man and woman, it is the soft-handed, soft-headed fop, who, perfumed until the air is actually sick, spends his summer in taking killing attitudes, and waving sentimental adieus, and talking infinitesimal nothings, and finding his heaven in the set of a lavender kid-glove. Boots as tight as an inquisition. Two hours of consummate skill exhibited in the tie of a flaming cravat. His conversation made up of "Ahs!" and "Ohs!" and "He-hes!" It would take five hundred of them stewed down to make a teaspoonful of calf's foot jelly. There is only one counterpart to such a man as that, and that is the frothy young woman at the watering-place; her conversation made up of French moonshine; what she has in her head only equaled by what she has on her back; useless ever since she was born, and to be useless until she is dead, useless until she becomes an intelligent Christian. We may admire music, and fair faces, and graceful step; but amid the heartlessness, and the inflation, and the fantastic influences of our modern watering-places, beware how you make life-long covenants.

Another temptation that will hover over the watering-place is that of baneful literature. Almost every one starting off for the summer takes some reading matter. It is a book out of the library, or off the bookstand, or bought of the boy hawking books through the cars. I really believe there is more pestiferous trash read among the intelligent classes in July and August, than in all the other ten months of the year. Men and women who at home would not be satisfied with a book that was not really sensible, I find sitting on hotel piazza, or under the trees, reading books, the index of which would make them blush if they knew that you knew what the book was. "Oh," they say, "you must have intellectual recreation." Yes. There is no need that you take along into a watering place "Hamilton's Metaphysics," or some ponderous discourse on the eternal decrees, or "Faraday's Philosophy." There are many easy books that are good. You might as well say, "I propose now to give a little rest to my digestive organs, and instead of eating heavy meat and vegetables, I will, for a little while, take lighter food—a little strychnine and a few grains of ratsbane." Literary poison in August is as bad as literary poison in December. Throw out all that stuff from your summer baggage. Are there not good books that are easy to read—books of entertaining travel, books of congenial history, books of pure fun, books of poetry, ringing with merry canto, books of fine engraving, books that will rest the mind as well as purify the heart and elevate the whole life? My hearers, there will not be an hour between this and the day of your death when you can afford to read a book lacking in moral principle.

Another temptation hovering all around our watering-places, is to intoxicating beverage. I am told that it is becoming more and more fashionable for women to drink; and it is not very long ago that a lady of great respectability in this city, having taken two glasses of wine away from home, became violent, and her friends, ashamed, forsook her, and she was carried to a police station, and afterward to her disgraced home. I care not how well a woman may dress, if she has taken enough of wine to flush her cheek and put a glassiness on her eye, she is intoxicated. She may be handed into a twenty-five hundred dollar carriage, and have diamonds enough to confound the Tiffany's—she is intoxicated. She may be a graduate of Packer Institute, and the daughter of some man in danger of being nominated for the Presidency—she is drunk. You may have a larger vocabulary than I have, and you may say in regard to her that she is "convivial," or she is "merry," or she is "festive," or she is "exhilarated;" but you cannot with all your garlands of verbiage, cover up the plain fact that it is an old-fashioned case of drunk. Now the watering-places are full of temptations to men and women to tipple. At the close of the tenpin or billiard game, they tipple. At the close of the cotillion, they tipple. Seated on the piazza cooling themselves off, they tipple. The tinged glasses come around with bright straws, and they tipple. First, they take "light wines," as they call them; but "light wines" are heavy enough to debase the appetite. There is not a very long road between champagne at five dollars a bottle and whiskey at ten cents a glass. Satan has three or four grades down which he takes men to destruction. One man he takes up, and through one spree pitches him into eternal darkness. That is a rare case. Very seldom, indeed, can you find a man who will be such a fool as that. Satan will take another man to a grade, to a descent at an angle about like the Pennsylvania coal-shoot or the Mount Washington rail-track, and shove him off. But that is very rare. When a man goes down to destruction, Satan brings him to a plane. It is almost a level. The depression is so slight that you can hardly see it. The man does not actually know that he is on the down grade, and it tips only a little toward darkness—just a little. And the first mile it is claret, and the second mile it is sherry, and the third mile it is punch, and the fourth mile it is ale, and the fifth mile it is porter, and the sixth mile it is brandy, and then it gets steeper, and steeper, and steeper, and the man gets frightened and says: "O, let me get off." "No," says the conductor, "this is an express-train, and it don't stop until it gets to the Grand Central depot of Smashupton!" Ah, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup,



UP MOUNT WASHINGTON.

when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

My friends, whether you tarry at home—which will be quite as safe and perhaps quite as comfortable—or go into the country, arm yourself against temptation. The grace of God is the only safe shelter, whether in town or country.

CHAPTER XXII.

WHISPERS.

Paul called the long roll of the world's villainy, and he put in the midst of this roll those persons known in all cities and communities and places as whisperers. They are so called because they generally speak under voice and in a confidential way, their hand to the side of their mouth acting as a funnel to keep the precious information from wandering into the wrong ear. They speak softly, not because they have lack of lung force, or because they are overpowered with the spirit of gentleness, but because they want to escape the consequences of defamation. If no one hears but the person whispered unto and the offender be arraigned, he can deny the whole thing, for whisperers are always first-class liars! Some people whisper because they are hoarse from a cold, or because they wish to convey some useful information without disturbing others; but the creatures photographed by the apostle give muffled utterance from sinister and depraved motive, and sometimes you can only hear the sibilant sound as the letter "S" drops from the tongue into the listening ear, the brief hiss of the serpent as it projects its venom. Whisperers are masculine and feminine with a tendency to majority on the side of those who are called "the lords of creation." Whisperers are heard at every window of bank cashier, and are heard in all counting rooms as well as in sewing societies and at meetings of asylum directors and managers. They are the worst foes of society; responsible for miseries innumerable; they are the scavengers of the world, driving their cart through every community, and I hold up for your holy anathema and execration these whisperers.

From the frequency with which Paul speaks of them under different titles, I conclude that he must have suffered somewhat from them. His personal presence was very defective, and that made him, perhaps, the target of their ridicule. And besides that, he was a bachelor, persisting in his celibacy down into the sixties, indeed, all the way through, and some having failed in their connubial designs upon him, the little missionary was put under the raking fire of these whisperers. He was no doubt a rare morsel for their scandalization: and he cannot keep his patience any longer and he lays hold of these miscreants of the tongue and gives them a very hard setting down among the scoundrelly and the murderers. "Envy, murder, depate, deceit, malignity: whisperers."

The law of libel makes quick and stout grip of open slander. If I should in a plain way charge you with fraud, or theft, or murder, or uncleanness, to-morrow morning I might have peremptory documents served on me, and I would have to pay in dollars and cents for the damage I had done your character. But these creatures spoken of are so small that they escape the fine tooth-comb of the law. They go on and they go on, escaping the judges and the juries and the penitentiaries. The district attorney cannot find them, the sheriff cannot find them, the grand jury cannot find them. Shut them off from one route of perfidy and they start on another. You cannot by the force of moral sentiment persuade them to desist. You might as well read the ten commandments to a flock of crows, expecting them to retreat under the force of moral sentiment. They are to be found everywhere, these whisperers. I think their paradise is a country village of about one or two thousand people where everybody knows everybody. But they also are to be found in large quantities in all our cities. They have a prying disposition. They look into the basement windows at the tables of their neighbors, and can tell just what they have morning and night to eat. They can see as far through a key-hole as other people can see with a door wide open. They can hear conversation on the opposite side of the room. Indeed, the world to them is a whispering gallery. They always put the worst construction on everything.

Some morning a wife descends into the street, her eyes damp with tears, and that is a stimulus to the tattler and is enough to set up a business for three or four weeks. "I guess that husband and wife don't live happily together. I wonder if he hasn't been abusing her? It's outrageous. He ought to be disciplined. He ought to be brought up before the church. I'll go right over to my neighbors and I'll let them know about this matter." She rushes in all out of breath to a neighbor's house and says: "Oh, Mrs. Allear, have you heard the dreadful news? Why, our neighbor, poor thing, came down off the steps in a flood of tears. That brute of a husband has been abusing her. Well, it's just as I expected. I saw him the other afternoon very smiling and very gracious to some one who smiled back, and I thought then I would just go up to him and tell him he had better go home and look after his wife and family who probably at that very time were upstairs crying their eyes out. Oh, Mrs. Allear, do have your husband go over and put an end to this trouble! It's simply outrageous that our neighborhood should be disturbed in this way. It's awful." The fact is that one man or woman set on fire of this hellish spirit will keep a whole neighborhood aboil. It does not require any very great brain. The chief requisition is that the woman have a small family or no family at all, because if she have a large family then she would have to stay at home and look after them. It is very important that she be single, or have no children at all, and then she can attend to all the secrets of the neighborhood all the time. A woman with a large family makes a very poor whisperer.

It is astonishing how these whisperers gather up everything. They know everything that happens. They have telephone and telegraph wires reaching from their ears to all the houses in the neighborhood. They have no taste for healthy news, but for the scraps and peelings thrown out of the scullery into the back yard they have great avidity. On the day when there is a new scandal in the newspapers, they have no time to go abroad. On the day when there are four or five columns of delightful private letters published in a divorce case, she stays at home and reads and reads and reads. No time for her Bible that day, but toward night, perhaps, she may find time to run out a little while and see whether there are any new developments. Satan does not have to keep a very sharp lookout for his evil dominion in that neighborhood. He has let out to her the whole contract. She gets husbands and wives into a quarrel, and brothers and sisters into antagonism, and she disgusts the pastor with the flock and the flock with the pastor, and she makes neighbors, who before were kindly disposed toward each other, over suspicious and critical, so when one of the neighbors passes by in a carriage they hiss through their teeth and say: "Ah, we could all keep carriages if we never paid our debts!"

When two or three whisperers get together they stir a caldron of trouble which makes me think of the three witches of *Macbeth* dancing around a boiling caldron in a dark cave:

"Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell both boil and bubble,
Double, double, toil and trouble,

Fire burn and caldron bubble,
Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy; maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark;
Make the gruel thick and stark;
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron
For the ingredients of our caldron.
Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Cool it with a baboon's blood;
Then the charm is firm and good."

I would only change Shakespeare in this, that, where he puts the word witch I would put the word whisperer. Ah, what a caldron! Did you ever get a taste out of it? I have more respect for the poor waif of the street that goes down under the gaslight, with no home and no God—for she deceives no one as to what she is—than I have for these hags of respectable society who cover up their tiger claws with a fine shawl, and bolt the hell of their heart with a diamond breast-pin!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

The work of the masculine whisperers is chiefly seen in the embarrassment of business. Now, I suppose out of the numberless men who at some time have been in business trouble in nine cases out of ten it was the result of some whisperer's work. The whisperer uttered some suspicion in regard to your credit. You sold your horse and carriage because you had no use for them, and the whisperer said: "Sold his horse and carriage because he had to sell them. The fact that he sold his horse and carriage shows he is going down in business." One of your friends gets embarrassed, and you are a little involved with him. The whisperer says: "I wonder if he can stand under all this pressure? I think he is going down. I think he will have to give up." You borrow money out of a bank and a director whispers outside about it, and after awhile the suspicion gets fairly started, and it leaps from one whisperer's lip to another whisperer's lip until all the people you owe want their money and want it right away, and the business circles come around you like a pack of wolves, and though you had assets four times more than were necessary to meet your liabilities, crash! went everything. Whisperers! whisperers! Oh, how much business men have suffered. Sometimes in the circles of clergymen we discuss why it is that a great many merchants do not go to church. I will tell you why they do not go to church. By the time Saturday night comes they are worn out with the annoyances of business life. They have had enough meanness practiced upon them to set their whole nervous system atwitch. People sometimes do not understand why in the Brooklyn Tabernacle we generally have men in the majority in almost all our audiences. It is because I preach so much to business men, and I resolved years ago that I would never let a Sunday pass but in prayer or sermon I would utter my sympathies for the struggle of business men, knowing that struggle as I do in many cases to be the work of whisperers. I have seen men whispered into bankruptcy. You have seen the same thing. Alas, for these gadabouts, these talebearers, these scandal mongers, these everlasting snoops! I hate them with an ever-increasing vehemence of hatred, and I ask God to give me more intensity with which to hate them.

I think among the worst of the whisperers are those who gather up all the harsh things that have been said about you and bring them to you—all the things said against you, or against your family, or against your style of business. They gather them all up and they bring them to you, they bring them to you in the very worst shape, they bring them to you without any of the extenuating circumstances, and after they have made your feelings all raw, very raw, they take this brine, this turpentine, this *aqua fortis*, and rub it in with a coarse towel, and rub it in until it sinks to the bone. They make you the pincushion in which they thrust all the sharp things they have ever heard about you. "Now, don't bring me into a scrape. Now don't tell anybody I told you. Let it be between you and me. Don't involve me in it at all." They aggravate you to the point of profanity, and then they wonder you cannot sing psalm tunes! They turn you on a spit before a hot fire and wonder why you are not absorbed in gratitude to them because they turn you on a spit. Peddlers of nightshade. Peddlers of Canada thistle. Peddlers of *nux vomica*. Sometimes they get you in a corner where you cannot very well escape without being rude, and then they tell you all about this one, and all about that one, and all about the other one, and they talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, talk. After awhile they go away leaving the place looking like a barnyard after the foxes and weasels have been around; here a wing, and there a claw, and yonder an eye, and there a crop. Oh, how they do make the feathers fly!

Rather than the defamation of good names, it seems to me it would be more honorable and useful if you just took a box of matches in your pocket and a razor in your hand, and go through the streets and see how many houses you can burn down and how many throats you can cut. That is a better business. The destruction of a man's name is worse than the destruction of his life. A woman came in confessional to a priest and told him that she had been slandering her neighbors. The priest gave her a thistle top and said: "You can take that thistle and scatter the seeds all over the field." She went and did so, and came back. "Now," said the priest, "gather up all those seeds." She said, "I can't." "Ah!" he said, "I know you can't; neither can you gather up the evil words you spoke about your neighbors." All good men and all good women have sometimes had detractors after them. John Wesley's wife whispered about him, whispered all over England, kept on whispering about that good man—as good a man as ever lived—and kept on whispering until the connubial relation was dissolved.

Jesus Christ had these whisperers after him, and they charged him with drinking too much and keeping bad company. "A wine bibber and the friend of publicans and sinners." You take the best man that ever lived, and put a detective on his track for ten years, watching where he goes and when he comes, and with a determination to misconstrue everything and to think he goes here for a bad purpose, and there for a bad purpose, with that determination of destroying him, at the end of ten years he will be held despicable in the sight of a great many people.

If it is an outrageous thing to despoil a man's character, how much worse is it to damage a woman's reputation? Yet that evil goes from century to century, and it is all done by whisperers. A suspicion is started. The next whisperer who gets hold of it states the suspicion as a proven fact, and many a good woman, as honorable as your wife or your mother, has been whispered out of all kindly associations, and whispered into the grave. Some people say there is no hell; but if there be no hell for such a despoiler of womanly character, it is high time that some philanthropist built one! But there is such a place established, and what a time they will have when all the whisperers get down there together rehearsing things! Everlasting carnival of mud. Were it not for the uncomfortable surroundings, you might suppose they would be glad to get there. In that region where they are all bad, what opportunities for exploration by these whisperers. On earth, to despoil their neighbors, sometimes they had to lie about them, but down there they can say the worst things possible about their neighbors, and tell the truth. Jubilee of whisperers. Grand gala day of backbiters. Semi-heaven of scandal-mongers stopping their gabble about their diabolical neighbors only long enough to go up to the iron gate and ask some newcomer from the earth, "What is the last gossip in our cities here?"

Now, how are we to war against this iniquity which curses every community on earth? First, by refusing to listen to or believe a whisperer. Every court of the land has for a law, and all decent communities have for a law, that you must hold people innocent until they are proved guilty. There is only one person worse than the whisperer, and that is the man or the woman who listens without protest. The trouble is, you hold the sack while they fill it. The receiver of stolen goods is just as bad as the thief. An ancient writer declares that a slanderer and a man who receives the slander ought both to be hung—the one by the tongue and the other by the ear. And I agree with him. When you hear something bad about your neighbors, do not go all over and ask about it, whether it is true, and scatter it and spread it. You might as well go to a small-pox hospital and take a patient and carry him all through the community, asking people if they really think it is a case of small-pox. That would be very bad for the patient and for all the neighbors. Do not retail slanders and whisperings. Do not make yourself the inspector of warts, and the supervisor of carbuncles, and the commissioner for street gutters, and the holder of stakes for a dog fight. Can it be that you, an immortal man, that you, an immortal woman, can find no better business than to become a gutter inspector?

Besides that, at your family table allow no detraction. Teach your children to speak well of others. Show them the difference between a bee and a wasp—the one gathering honey, the other thrusting a sting. I read of a family where they kept what they called a slander book, and when any slanderous words were uttered in the house about anybody, or detraction uttered, it was all put down in this book. The book was kept carefully. For the first few weeks there were a great many entries, but after a while there were no entries at all. Detraction stopped in that household. It would be a good thing to have a slander book in all households.

Are any of you given to this habit of whispering about others? Let me persuade you to desist. Mount Taurus was a great place for eagles, and cranes would fly along that way, and they would cackle so loud that the eagles would know of their coming and they would pounce upon them and destroy them. It is said that the old cranes found this out, and before they started on their flight they would always put a stone in their mouth so they could not cackle, and then they would fly in perfect safety. Oh, my friends, be as wise as the old cranes and avoid the folly of the young cranes! Do not cackle. If you are whispered about, if you are slandered, if you are abused in any circle of life, let me say for your encouragement that these whisperers soon run out. They may do little damage for a while, but after a while their detraction becomes a eulogy, and people understand them just as well as though some one chalked all over their overcoat or their shawl these words: "Here goes a whisperer. Room for the leper. Room!" You go ahead and do your duty, and God will take care of your reputation. How dare you distrust Him? You have committed to Him your souls. Can you not trust Him with your reputation? Get down on your knees before God and settle the whole matter there. That man whom God takes care of is well sheltered.

Let me charge you to make right and holy use of the tongue. It is loose at one end and can swing either way, but it is fastened at the other end to the floor of your mouth, and that makes you responsible for the way it wags. Xanthus the philosopher told his servant that on the morrow he was going to have some friends to dine, and told him to get the best thing he could find in the market. The philosopher and his guests sat down the next day at the table. They had nothing but tongue—four or five courses of tongue—tongue cooked in this way and tongue cooked in that way, and the philosopher lost his patience and said to his servant, "Didn't I tell you to get the best thing in the market?" He said: "I did get the best thing in the market. Isn't the tongue the organ of sociality, the organ of eloquence, the organ of kindness, the organ of worship?" Then Xanthus said: "To-morrow I want you to get the worst thing in the market." And on the morrow the philosopher sat at the table, and there was nothing there but tongue—four or five courses of tongue—tongue in this shape and tongue in that shape—and the philosopher again lost his patience and said: "Didn't I tell you to get the worst thing in the market?" The servant replied: "I did; for isn't the tongue the organ of blasphemy, the organ of defamation, the organ of lying?" Oh, employ the tongue which God so wonderfully created as the organ of taste, the organ of deglutition, the organ of articulation to make others happy, and in the service of God! If you whisper, whisper good—encouragement to the fallen and hope to the lost. Ah, my friends, the time will soon come when we will all whisper! The voice will be enfeebled in the last sickness, and though that voice could laugh and shout and sing and halloo until the forest echoes answered, it will be so feeble then we can only whisper consolation to those whom we leave behind, and only whisper our hope of heaven.

While I write there are hundreds whispering their last utterances. Oh, when that solemn hour comes to you and to me, as come soon it will, may it be found that we did our best to serve Christ, and to cheer our comrades in the earthly struggle, and that we consecrated not only our hand but our tongue to God. So that the shadows that fall around our dying pillow shall not be the evening twilight of a gathering night, but the morning twilight of an everlasting day. This morning, at half-past five o'clock, I looked out of my window, and the stars were very dim. I looked out a few moments after, and the stars were almost invisible. I looked out an hour or two afterward. Not a star was to be seen. What was the matter of the stars? Had they melted into darkness? No. They had melted into the glorious light of morn.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LIES.

There are thousands of ways of telling a lie. A man's whole life may be a falsehood and yet never with his lips may he falsify once. There is a way of uttering falsehood by look, by manner as well as by lip. There are persons who are guilty of dishonesty of speech and then afterward say " may be; " call it a white lie, when no lie is that color. The whitest lie ever told was as black as perdition. There are those so given to dishonesty of speech that they do not know when they are lying. With some it is an acquired sin, and with others it is a natural infirmity. There are those whom you will recognize as born liars. Their whole life, from cradle to grave, is filled up with vice of speech. Misrepresentation and prevarication are as natural to them as the intantile diseases, and are a sort of moral croup or spiritual scarlatina. Then there are those who in after life have opportunities of developing this evil, and they go from deception to deception, and from class to class, until they are regularly graduated liars.

There is something in the presence of natural objects that has a tendency to make one pure. The trees never issue false stock. The wheat fields are always honest. Rye and oats never move out in the night, not paying for the place they occupy. Corn shocks never make false assignment. Mountain brooks are always current. The gold of the wheat fields is never counterfeit. But while the tendency of agricultural life is to make one honest, honesty is not the characteristic of all who come to the city markets from the country districts. You hear the creaking of the dishonest farm-wagon in almost every street of our great cities, a farm-wagon in which there is not one honest spoke or one truthful rivet from tongue to tail-board. Again and again has domestic economy in our great cities foundered on the farmer's firkin. When New York and Brooklyn and Cincinnati and Boston sit down and weep over their sins, Westchester and Long Island counties and all the country districts ought to sit down and weep over theirs.

The tendency in all rural districts is to suppose that sins and transgressions cluster in our great cities; but citizens and merchants long ago learned that it is not safe to calculate from the character of the apples on the top of the farmer's barrel what is the character of the apples all the way down toward the bottom. Many of our citizens and merchants have learned that it is always safe to see the farmer measure the barrel of beets. Milk cans are not always honest. There are those who in country life seem to think they have a right to overreach grain-dealers, merchants of all styles. They think it is more honorable to raise corn than to deal in corn. The producer sometimes practically says the merchant: "you get your money easily anyhow." Does he get it easy? While the farmer sleeps, and he may go to sleep conscious of the fact that his corn and rye are all the time progressing and adding to his fortune or his livelihood, the merchant tries to sleep while conscious of the fact that at any moment the ship may be driving on the rock, or a wave sweeping over the hurricane deck spoiling his goods, or the speculators may be plotting a monetary revolution, or the burglars may be at that moment at his money safe, or the fire may have kindled on the very block where his store stands. Let those who get their living in the quiet farm and barn take the place of one of our city merchants and see whether it is so easy. It is hard enough to have the hands blistered with out-door work, but it is harder with mental anxieties to have the brain consumed. God help the merchants. And do not let those who live in country life come to the conclusion that all dishonesties belong to city life.

There are those who apologize for deviations from the right and for practical deception by saying it is commercial custom. In other words, a lie by multiplication becomes a virtue. There are large fortunes gathered in which there is not one drop of the sweat of unrequitted toil, and not one spark of bad temper flashes from the bronze bracket, and there is not one drop of needlewoman's heart's blood on the crimson plush; while there are other fortunes about which it may be said that on every door-knob and on every figure of the carpet, and on every wall there is the mark of dishonor. What if the hand wrung by toil and blistered until the skin comes off should be placed on the exquisite wall paper, leaving its mark of blood—four fingers and a thumb; or, if in the night the man should be aroused from his slumber again and again by his own conscience, getting himself up on elbow and crying out into the darkness, "Who is there?"

There are large fortunes upon which God's favor comes down, and it is just as honest and just as Christian to be affluent as it is to be poor. In many a house there is a blessing on every pictured wall and on every scroll, and on every traceried window, and the joy that flashes in the lights, and that showers in the music, and that dances in the quick feet of the children pattering through the hall has in it the favor of God and the approval of man. And there are thousands and tens of thousands of merchants who from the first day they sold a yard of cloth, or a firkin of butter, have maintained their integrity. They were born honest, they will live honest, and they will die honest.

But you and I know that there are in commercial life those who are guilty of great dishonesties of speech. A merchant says: "I am selling these goods at less than cost."

Is he getting for those goods a price inferior to that which he paid for them? Then he has spoken the truth. Is he getting more? Then he lies. A merchant says: "I paid twenty-five dollars for this article." Is that the price he paid for it? All right. But suppose he paid for it twenty-three dollars instead of twenty-five dollars. Then he lies.

But there is just as many falsehoods before the counter as there are behind the counter. A customer comes in and asks: "How much is this article?" "It is five dollars." "I can get that for four somewhere else." Can he get it for four somewhere else, or did he say that just for the purpose of getting it cheap by depreciating the value of the goods? If so, he lied. A man unrolls upon the counter a bale of handkerchiefs. The customer says: "Are these all silk?" "Yes." "No cotton in them?" "No cotton in them." Are those handkerchiefs all silk? Then the merchant told the truth. Is there any cotton in them? Then he lied. Moreover, he defrauds himself, for this customer will after a while find out that he has been defrauded, and the next time he comes to town and goes shopping, he will look up at that sign and say: "No, I won't go there; that's the place where I got those handkerchiefs." First, the merchant insulted God, and secondly, he picked his own pocket.

Who would take the responsibility of saying how many falsehoods were yesterday told by hardware men, and clothiers, and lumbermen, and tobacconists, and jewelers, and importers, and shippers, and dealers in furniture, and dealers in coal, and dealers in groceries? Lies about buckles, about saddles, about harness, about shoes, about hats, about coats, about shovels, about tongs, about forks, about chairs, about sofas, about horses, about lands, about everything. I arraign commercial falsehood as one of the crying sins of our time.

Among the artisans are those upon whom we are dependent for the houses in which we live, the garments we wear, the cars in which we ride. The vast majority of them are, so far as I know them, men who speak the truth, and they are upright, and many of them are foremost in great philanthrophies and in churches; but they all do not belong to that class every one knows. In times when there is a great demand for labor, it is not so easy for such men to keep their obligations, because they may miscalculate in regard to the weather, or they may not be able to get the help they anticipated in their enterprise. I am speaking now of those who promise to do that which they know they will not be able to do. They say they will come on Monday; they do not come until Wednesday. They say they will come Wednesday; they do not come until Saturday. They say they will have the job done in ten days; they do not get it done before thirty. And then when a man becomes irritated and will not stand it any longer, then they go and work for him a day or two and keep the job along; and then some one else gets irritated and outraged and they go and work for that man and get him pacified, and then they go somewhere else. I believe they call that "nursing the job!" How much dishonor such men would save their souls if they would promise to do only that which they know they can do. "Oh," they say, "it's of no importance; everybody expects to be deceived and disappointed." There is a voice of thunder sounding among the saws and hammers and the shears, saying: "All liars shall have their place in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone." So in all styles of work there are those who are not worthy of their work.

How much of society is insecure. You hardly know what to believe. They send their regards; you do not exactly know whether it is an expression of the heart, or an external civility. They ask you to come to their house; you hardly know whether they really want you to come. We are all accustomed to take a discount off of what we hear. Social life is struck through with insincerity. They apologize for the fact that the furnace is out; they have not had any fire in it all winter. They apologize for the fare on their table; they never live any better. They decry their most luxuriant entertainment to win a shower of approval from you. They point at a picture on the wall as a work of one of the old masters. They say it is an heirloom in the family. It hung on the wall of a castle. A duke gave it to their grandfather! People that will lie about nothing else will lie about a picture. On small income we want the world to believe we are affluent, and society to-day is struck through with cheat and counterfeit and sham. How few people are natural! Frigidity sails around, iceberg grinding against iceberg. You must not laugh outright; that is vulgar. You must smile. You must not dash quickly across the room; that is vulgar. You must glide. Society is a round of bows and grins and grimaces and oh's and ah's and he, he, he's and simperings and namby-pambyism, a whole world of which is not worth one good round of laughter. From such a hollow scene the tortured guest retires at the close of the evening, assuring the host that he has enjoyed himself. Society is become so contorted and deformed in this respect that a mountain cabin where the rustics gather at a quilting or an apple-paring has in it more good cheer than all the frescoed refrigerators of the metropolis.

It is hardly worth your while to ask an extreme Calvinist what an Arminian believes. He will tell you an Arminian believes that man can save himself. An Arminian believes no such thing. It is hardly worth your while to ask an extreme Arminian what a Calvinist believes. He will tell you that a Calvinist believes that God made some men just to damn them. A Calvinist believes no such thing. It is hardly worth your while to ask a Pedo-Baptist what a Baptist believes. He will tell you a Baptist believes that immersion is necessary for salvation. A Baptist does not believe any such thing. It is hardly worth your while to ask a man, who very much hates Presbyterians, what a Presbyterian believes. He will tell you that a Presbyterian believes that there are infants in hell a span long, and that very phrase ology has come down from generation to generation in the Christian Church. There never was a Presbyterian who believed that. "Oh," you say, "I heard some Presbyterian minister twenty years ago say so." You did not. There never was a man who believed that, there never will be a man who will believe that. And yet from boyhood I have heard that particular slander against a Christian Church going down through the community.

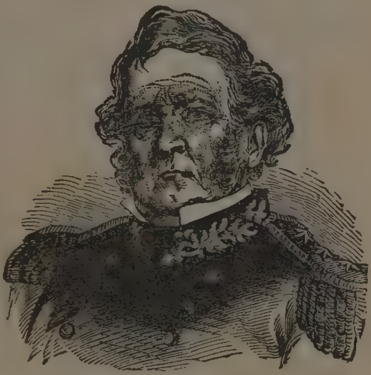
Then how often it is that there are misrepresentations on the part of individual churches in regard to other churches—especially if a church comes to great prosperity. As long as a church is in poverty, and the singing is poor and all the surroundings are decrepit, and the congregation are so hardly bestead in life that their pastor goes with elbows out, then there will always be Christian people in churches who say, "what a pity, what a pity!" But let the day of prosperity come to a Christian Church, and let the music be triumphant, and let there be vast assemblages, and then there will be even ministers of the Gospel critical and denunciatory and full of misrepresentation and falsification, giving the impression to the outside world that they do not like the corn because it is not ground in their mill. Oh, my friends, let us in all departments of life stand back from deception.

"Oh," says some one, "the deception that I practice is so small it don't amount to anything." It does amount to a great deal. You say, "when I deceive it is only about a case of needles, or a box of buttons, or a row of pins." But the article may be so small you can put it in your vest pocket, but the sin is as big as the pyramids, and the echo of your dishonor will reverberate through the mountains of eternity. There is no such thing as a small sin. They are all vast and stupendous, because they will all have to come under inspection in the Day of Judgment.

CHAPTER XXIV.

STRIPPING THE SLAIN.

Some of you were at South Mountain or Shiloh or Ball's Bluff or Gettysburg, and I ask you if there is any sadder sight than a battle-field after the guns have stopped firing? I walked across the field of Antietam just after the conflict. The scene was so sickening I shall not describe it. Every valuable thing had been taken from the bodies of the dead, for there are always vultures hovering over and around about an army, and they pick up the watches, and the memorandum books, and the letters, and the daguerreotypes, and the hats, and the coats, applying them to their own uses. The dead make no resistance. So there are always camp followers going on after an army, as when Scott went down into Mexico, as when Napoleon marched up toward Moscow, as when Van Moltke went to Sedan. Saul and his army had been horribly cut to pieces. Mount Gilboa was ghastly with the dead. On the morrow the stragglers came on to the field, and they lifted the lachet of the helmet from under the chin of the dead, and they picked up the swords and bent them on their knee to test the temper of the metal, and they opened the wallets and counted the coin. Saul lay dead along the



GEN. WINFIELD SCOTT.

ground, eight or nine feet in length, and I suppose the cowardly Philistines, to show their bravery, leaped upon the trunk of his carcass, and jeered at the fallen slain, and whistled through the mouth of the helmet. Before night, those cormorants had taken everything valuable from the field; "And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa."

NAPOLEON I.

I will show you that the same process is going on all the world over, and every day, and that when men have fallen, Satan and the world, so far from pitying them or helping them, go to work remorselessly to take what little is left, thus stripping the slain.

There are tens of thousands of young men every year coming from the country to our great cities. They come with brave hearts and grand expectations. They think they will be Rufus Choates in the law, or Drapers in chemistry, or A. T. Stewarts in merchandise. The country lads sit down in the village grocery, with their feet on the iron rod around the red-hot stove, in the evening, talking over the prospects of the young man who has gone off to the city. Two or three of them think that perhaps he may get along very well and succeed, but the most of them prophesy failure; for it is very hard to think that those whom we knew in boyhood will ever make any stir in the world. But our young man has a fine position in a dry goods store. The month is over. He gets his wages. He is not accustomed to have so much money belonging to himself. He is a little excited and does not exactly know what to do with it, and he spends it in some places where he ought not. Soon there come up new companions and acquaintances from the barrooms and the saloons of the city. Soon that young man begins to waver in the battle of temptation, and soon his soul goes down. In a few months or a few years he has fallen. He is morally dead. He is a mere corpse of what he once was. The harpies of sin snuff up the taint and come on the field. His garments gradually give out. He has pawned his watch. His health is failing him. His credit perishes. He is too poor to stay in the city, and he is too poor to pay his way home to the country. Down! Down! Why do the low fellows of the city now stick to him so closely? Is it to help him back to a moral and spiritual life? O, no. I will tell you why they stay; they are the Philistines stripping the slain.

There is a man who once had a beautiful home. His house had elegant furniture, his children were beautifully clad, his name was synonymous with honor and usefulness; but evil habit knocked at his front door, knocked at his back door, knocked at his parlor door, knocked at his bedroom door. Where is the piano? Sold to pay the rent. Where is the hat-rack? Sold to meet the butcher's bill. Where are the carpets? Sold to get bread. Where is the wardrobe? Sold to get rum. Where are the daughters? Working their fingers off in trying to keep the family together. Worse and worse, until everything is gone. Who is that going up the front steps of that house? That is a creditor, hoping to find some chair or bed that has not been levied upon. Who are those two gentlemen now going up the front steps? The one is a constable, the other is the sheriff. Why do they go there? The unfortunate is morally dead, socially dead, financially dead. Why do they go there? I will tell you why the creditors and the constables and the sheriffs go there. They are, some on their own account, and some on account of the law, stripping the slain.

An ex-member of Congress, one of the most eloquent men that ever stood in the House of Representatives, said in his last moments: "This is the end. I am dying—dying on a borrowed bed, covered by a borrowed sheet, in a house built by public charity. Bury me under that tree in the middle of the field, where I shall not be crowded, for I have been crowded all my life." Where were the jolly politicians and the dissipating comrades who had been with him, laughing at his jokes, applauding his eloquence, and plunging him into sin? They have left. Why? His money is gone, his reputation is gone, his wit is gone, his clothes are gone, everything is gone. Why should they stay any longer? They have completed their work. They have stripped the slain.

There is another way, however, of doing that same work. Here is man who, through his sin, is prostrate. He acknowledges that he has done wrong. Now is the time for you to go to that man and say: "Thousands of people have been as far astray as you are, and got back." Now is the time for you to go to that man and tell him of the omnipotent grace of God that is sufficient for any poor soul. Now is the time to go to tell him how swearing John Bunyan, through the grace of God, afterwards came to the celestial city. Now is the time to go to that man and tell him how profligate Newton came, through conversion, to be a world-renowned preacher of righteousness. Now is the time to tell that man that multitudes who have been pounded with all the flails of sin, and dragged through all the sewers of pollution, at last have risen to positive dominion of moral power. You do not tell him that, do you? No. You say to him, "Loan you money? No. You are down. You will have to go to the dogs. Lend you a shilling? I would not lend you two cents to keep you from the gallows. You are debauched.

Get out of my sight now. Down; you will have to stay down." And thus these bruised and battered men are sometimes accosted by those who ought to lift them up. Thus the last vestige of hope is taken from them. Thus those who ought to go and lift and save them are guilty of stripping the slain. The point I want to make is this: Sin is hard, cruel and merciless. Instead of helping a man up it helps him down; and when, like Saul and his comrades, you lie on the field, it will come and steal your sword and helmet and shield, leaving you to the jackal and the crow.

But the world and Satan do not do all their work with the outcast and abandoned. A respectable, impenitent man comes to die. He is flat on his back. He could not get up if the house were on fire. Adroitest medical skill and gentlest nursing have been a failure. He has come to his last hour. What does Satan do for such a man? Why he fetches up all the inapt, disagreeable, and harrowing things in his life. He says: "Do you remember those chances you had for heaven, and missed them? Do you remember all those lapses in conduct? Do you remember all those opprobrious words and thoughts and actions? Don't remember them, eh? I'll make you remember them." And then he takes all the past and empties it on that death-bed, as the mail bags are emptied on the post-office floor. The man is sick. He cannot get away from them. Then the man says to Satan: "You have deceived me. You told me that all would be well. You said there would be no trouble at the last. You told me if I did so and so you would do so and so. Now you corner me, and hedge me up, and submerge me in everything evil." "Ha! ha!" says Satan, "I was only fooling you. It is mirth for me to see you suffer. I have been for thirty years plotting to get you just where you are. It is hard for you now—it will be worse for you after a while. It pleases me. Lie still, sir. Don't flinch or shudder. Come now, I will tear off from you the last rag of expectation. I will rend away from your soul the last hope. I will leave you bare for the beating of the storm. It is my business to strip the slain."

While men are in robust health, and their digestion is good, and their nerves are strong, they think their physical strength will get them safely through the last exigency. They say it is only cowardly women who are afraid at the last, and cry out for God. "Wait till I come to die. I will show you. You won't hear me pray, nor call for a minister, nor want a chapter read me from the Bible." But after the man has been three weeks in a sick room his nerves are not so steady, and his worldly companions are not anywhere near to cheer him up, and he is persuaded that he must quit life, his physical courage is all gone. He jumps at the fall of a tea-spoon in a saucer. He shivers at the ide of going away. He says: "Wife, I don't think my infidelity is going to take me through. For God's sake don't bring up the children to do as I have done. If you feel like it I wish you you would read a verse or two out of Fannie's Sabbath-school hymn-book or New Testament. But Satan breaks in, and says· "You have always thought religion trash and a lie; don't give up at the last. Besides that, you cannot, in the hour you have to live, get off on that track. Die as you lived. With my great black wings I shut out that light. Die in darkness. I rend away from you that last vestige of hope. It is my business to strip the slain."

A man who had rejected Christianity, and thought it all trash, came to die. He was in the sweat of a great agony, and his wife said: "We had better have some prayer." "Mary, not a breath of that," he said. "The lightest word of prayer would roll back on me like rocks on a drowning man. I have come to the hour of test. I had a chance, and I forfeited it. I believed in a liar, and he has left me in the lurch. Mary, bring me Tom Paine, the book that I swore by and lived by, and pitch it in the fire, and let it burn and burn as I myself shall soon burn." And then, with the foam on his lip, and his hands tossing wildly in the air, he cried out: "Blackness of darkness! O, my God, too late!" And the spirits of darkness whistled up from the depth, and wheeled around and around him, stripping the slain.

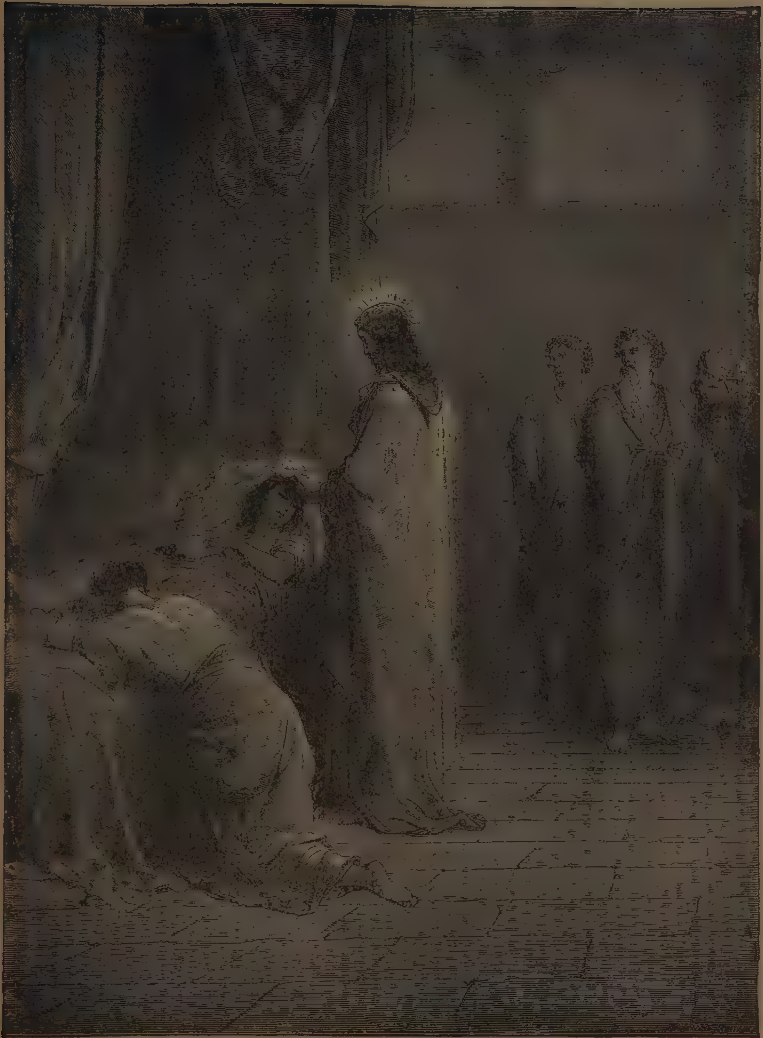
Sin is a luxury now; it is exhilaration now; it is victory now. But after a while it is collision; it is defeat; it is extermination; it is jackalism; it is robbing the dead; it is stripping the slain. Give it up. O, how you have been cheated on, from one thing to another. All these years you have been under an evil mastery that you understood not. What have your companions done for you? What have they done for your health? Nearly ruined it by carousal. What have they done for your fortune? Almost scattered it by spendthrift behavior. What have they done for your reputation? Almost ruined it with good men. What have they done for your immortal soul. Almost insured its overthrow. You are hastening on toward the consummation of all that is sad. You stop and think, but it is only for a moment, and then you will tramp on, and the tremendous fact remains that, if impenitent, you are going at eighteen knots an hour towards shipwreck! Yea, you are in a battle where you will fall; and while your surviving relatives will take your remaining estate, and the cemetery will take your body, the messengers of darkness will take your soul and come and go about you for the next ten million years, stripping the slain.

Many are crying out: "I admit I am slain, I admit it." On what battle-field, my brothers? By what weapon? "Polluted imagination," says one man; "Intoxicating liquor," says another man; "My own hard heart," says another man. Do you realize this? Then I come to tell you that the omnipotent Christ is ready to walk across this battle-field and revive and resuscitate and resurrect your dead soul. Let Him take your hand and rub away the numbness; your head, and bathe off the aching; your heart, and stop its wild throb.

He brought Lazarus to life; He brought Jairus's daughter to life; He brought the young man of Nain to life; and these are three proofs anyhow that He can bring you to life.

When the Philistines came down on the field, they stepped between the corpses, and they rolled over the dead, and they took away everything that was valuable; and so it was with the people that followed after our army at Chancellorsville, and at Pittsburg Landing, and at Stone River, and at Atlanta, stripping the slain; but the Northern and Southern women —God bless them— came on the field with basins and pads and towels and lint and cordials and Christian encouragement, and the poor fellows that lay there lifted up their arms and said: "Oh, how good that does feel since you dressed it;" and others looked up and said: "Oh, how you make me think of my mother;" and others said: "Tell the folks at home I died thinking about them;" and another looked up and said: "Miss, won't you sing me a verse of 'Home, Sweet Home' before I die?" And then the tattoo was sounded, and the hats were off, and the service was read: "I am the resurrection and the life," and in honor of the departed the muskets were loaded and the command given: "Take aim—fire!" And there was a shingle set up at the head of the grave with the epitaph of "Lieutenant——in the Fourteenth Massachusetts Regulars," or "Captain ——in the Fifteenth Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers." And so, across this great field of moral and spiritual battle, the angels of God come walking among the slain, and there are voices of comfort and voices of hope and voices of resurrection and voices of heaven.

Oh, the slain! the slain! Christ is ready to give life to the dead. He will make the deaf ear to hear, the blind eye to see, the pulseless heart to beat, and the damp walls of your spiritual charnel house will crash into ruin at His cry: "Come forth!" I verily believe there are souls who are now dead in sin, who in half an hour will be alive forever. There



THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.

was a thrilling dream, a glorious dream—you may have heard of it. Ezekiel closed his eyes, and he saw two mountains, and a valley between the mountains. The valley looked as though there had been a great battle there, and a whole army had been slain, and they had been unburied; and the heat of the land, and the vultures coming there, soon the bones were exposed to the sun, and they looked like thousands of snow drifts all through the valley. Frightful spectacle! The bleaching skeletons of a host! But Ezekiel still kept his eyes shut; and lo, there were four currents of wind that struck that battle-field, and when those four currents of wind met, the bones began to rattle; and the foot came to the ankle, and the hand came to the wrist, and the jaws clashed together, and the spinal column gathered up the ganglions and the nervous fibre, and all the valley wriggled and writhed and throbbed and rocked and rose up. There, a man coming to life. There, a hundred men. There, a thousand; and all falling into line waiting for the shout of their commander. Ten thousand bleached skeletons springing up into ten thousand warriors, panting for the fray. I hope that instead of being a dream it may be a prophecy of what we shall see for there are many thousand without one pulsation of spiritual life. I look off in one direction, and they are dead. I look off in another direction, and they are dead. Who will bring them to life? Who shall rouse them up? If I should halloo at the top of my voice I could not wake them. Wait a moment! Listen! There is a rustling. There is a gale from heaven. It comes from the north and from the south, and from the east and from the west. It shuts us in. It blows upon the slain. There, a soul begins to move in spirittual life; there, ten souls; there, a score of souls; there, a hundred souls. The nostril throbbing in devine respiration, the hands lifted as though to take hold of heaven, the tongue moving as in prayer and adoration. Life! immortal life coming into the slain. Ten men for God—fifty—a hundred

—a regiment—an army for God. In Ezekiel's words, and in almost a frenzy of prayer, I cry: "Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon the slain."

You will have to surrender your heart to God. You cannot take the responsibility of fighting against the Spirit in this crisis, which will decide whether you are to go to heaven or to hell—to join the hallelujahs of the saved, or the howlings of the damned. You must pray. You must repent. You must fling your sinful soul on the pardoning mercy of God. *You must.* I see your resolution against God giving way. Your determination wavering. I break through the breach in the wall and follow up the advantage gained, hoping to rout your last opposition to Christ, and make you "ground arms" at the feet of the Divine Conqueror. O, you must! You must! The moon does not ask the tides of the Atlantic ocean to rise. It only stoops down with two great hands of light, the one at the European beach and the other at the American beach, and then lifts the great laver of molten silver. And God, it seems to me, is now going to lift you to newness of life. Do you not feel the swellings of the great oceanic tides of divine mercy? My heart is in anguish to have you saved. For this I pray and long, glad to be called a fool for Christ's sake and your salvation. The work has all been done. Christ did it with His own torn hand and lacerated foot and bleeding side. He took your place and died your death, if you would only believe it, only accept Him as your substitute. "But," you say, "how am I to get up to that feeling?" I reply, the Holy Spirit is ready to help you up to that feeling, if you will only ask Him.

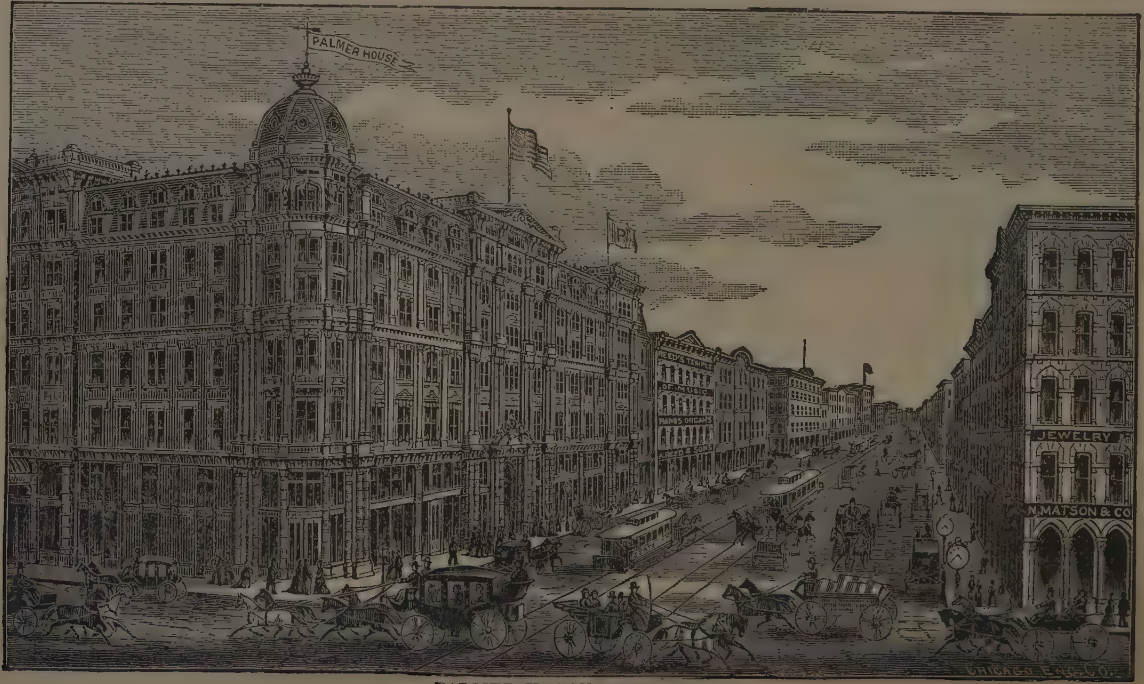
What an amazing pity that any man should go unblessed, when such a large blessing is offered him at less cost than you would pay for a pin—"without money and without price." I have driven down with the Lord's ambulance to the battle-field where your soul lies exposed to the darkness and the storm, and I want to lift you in and drive off with you towards heaven. O, Christians, by your prayers help lift these wounded souls into the ambulance. God forbid that any should be left on the field, and that at last eternal sorrow and remorse and despair should come up around their soul like the bandit Philistines to the field of Gilboa, stripping the slain.

CHAPTER XXV.

PITFALLS.

If, in the time when people traveled afoot or on camel-back, and vacillation from city to city was seldom, it was important that Solomon recognize the presence of strangers, how much more important, now in these days, when by railroad and steamboat the population of the earth are always in motion, and from one year's end to the other, our cities are crowded with visitors, the depots and wharves are a-rumble and a-clang with the coming in of a great immigration of strangers. Some of them come for purposes of barter, some for mechanism, some for artistic gratification, some for sight-seeing. A great many of them go out on the evening trains, and consequently the city makes but little impression upon them; but there are multitudes who, in the hotels and boarding houses, make temporary residence. They tarry here for three or four days, or as many weeks. They spend the days in the stores and the evenings in sight-seeing. Their temporary stay will make or break them, not only financially but morally, for this world and the world that is to come. Multitudes of them come into morning and evening services, those unknown to others, whose history, if told, would be more thrilling than the deepest tragedy, more exciting than Nilsson's song, more bright than a spring morning more awful than a wintry midnight. If they could stand up and tell the story of their escapes, and their temptations, and their bereavements, and their disasters, and their victories, and their defeats, there would be such a commingling of groans and acclamations as would prove unendurable.

There is a man who, in infancy, lay in a cradle satin-


PALMER HOUSE
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REED'S TEMPLE
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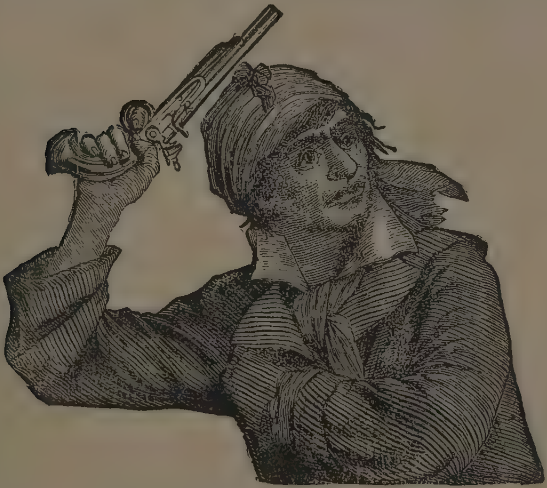
PALMER HOUSE, CHICAGO

lined. There is a man who was picked up, a foundling, on Boston Common. Here is a man who coolly observes Sabbath service, expecting no advantage, and caring for no advantage for himself; while yonder is a man who has been for ten years in an awful conflagration of evil habits and is a mere cinder of a destroyed nature, and he wonders if there shall be any escape or help for his immortal soul. St. Paul's ship at Melita went to pieces where two seas meet; but we stand at a point where a thousand seas converge, and eternity alone can tell the issue of the hour.

The hotels of this country, for beauty and elegance, are not surpassed by the hotels in any other land; but those that are most celebrated for brilliancy of tapestry and mirror cannot give to the guest any costly apartment, unless he can afford a parlor in addition to his lodging. The stranger, therefore, will generally find assigned to him a room without any pictures, and perhaps any rocking chair! He will find a box of matches on a bureau, and an old newspaper left by the previous occupant, and that will be about all the ornamentation. At seven o'clock in the evening, after having taken his repast, he will look over his memorandum-book of the day's work; he will write a letter to his home, and then a desperation will seize upon him to get out. You hear the great city thundering under your windows, and you say: "I must join that procession," and in ten minutes you have joined it. Where are you going? "Oh," you say, "I haven't made up my mind yet." Better make up your mind before you start. Perhaps the very way you go now you will always go. Twenty years ago there were young men who came down the Astor House steps, and started out in a wrong direction, where they have been going ever since.

"Well, where are you going?" says one man. "I am going to the Academy to hear some music." Good. I would like to join you at the door. At the tap of the orchestral baton, all the gates of harmony and beauty will open before your soul. I congratulate you. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to see some advertised pictures." Good. I should like to go along with you and look over the same catalogue, and study with you Kensett, and Bierstadt, and Church, and Moran. Nothing more elevating than good pictures. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to the Young Men's Christian Association rooms." Good. You will find there gymnastics to strengthen the muscles, and books to improve the mind, and Christian influence to save the soul. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going to take a long walk up Broadway, and so turn around into the Bowery. I am going to study human life." Good. A walk through Broadway at eight o'clock at night is interesting, educating, fascinating, appalling, exhilarating to the last degree. Stop in front of that theater, and see who goes in. Stop at that saloon, and see who comes out. See the great tides of life surging backward and forward, and beating against the marble of the curbstone, and eddying down into the saloons. What is that mark on the face of that debauchee? It is the hectic flush of eternal death. What is that Woman's laughter? It is the shriek of a lost soul. Who is that Christian man going along with a phial of anodyne to the dying pauper. Who is that belated man on the way to a prayer-meeting? Who is that city missionary going to take a box in which to bury a child? Who are all these clusters of bright and beautiful faces? They are going to some interesting place of amusement. Who is that man going into the drug-store? That is the man who yesterday lost all his fortune on Wall street. He is going in for a dose of belladonna, and before morning it will make no difference to him whether stocks are up or down. I tell you that Broadway, between seven and twelve o'clock at night, is an Austerlitz, a Gettysburg, a Waterloo, where kingdoms are lost or won, and three worlds mingle in the strife.

I meet another coming down off the hotel steps, and I say: "Where are you going?" You say: "I am going with a merchant of New York who has promised to-night to show me the underground life of the city. I am his customer, and he is going to oblige me very much." Stop! A business house that tries to get or keep your custom through such a process as that, is not worthy of you. There are business establishments in our cities which have for years been sending to eternal destruction hundreds and thousands of merchants. They have a secret drawer in the counter, where money is kept, and the clerk goes and gets it when he wants to take these visitors to the city through the low slums of the place. Shall I mention the names of some of these great commercial establishments? I have them on my lip. Shall I? Perhaps I had better leave it to the young men who, in that process, have been destroyed themselves while they have been destroying others. I care not how high-sounding the name of a commercial establishment, if it proposes to get customers or to keep them by such a process as that; drop their acquaintance. They will cheat you before you get through. They will send to you a style of goods different from that which you bought by sample. They will give you underweight. There will be in the package half-a-dozen less pairs of suspenders than you paid for. They will rob you. Oh, you feel in your pockets and say: "Is my money gone?" They have robbed you of something for which pounds and shillings can never give you compensation. When one of these merchants has been dragged by one of these commercial agents through the slums of the city, he is not fit to go home. The mere memory of what he has seen will be moral pollution, unless he go on positive Christian errand. I think you had better let the city missionary and the police and the Christian reformer attend to the exploration of underground life. You do not go to a small-pox hospital for the purpose of exploration. You do not go there, because you are afraid of the contagion. And yet, you go into the presence of a moral leprosy that is as much more dangerous to you as the death of the soul is worse than the death of the body. I will undertake to say that nine-tenths of the men who have been ruined in our cities have been ruined by simply going to observe without any idea of participating. The fact is that underground city life is a filthy, fuming, reeking, pestiferous depth which may blast the eye that looks at it. In the Reign of Terror, in 1792, in Paris, people, escaping from the officers of the law, got into the sewers of the city, and crawled and walked through miles of that awful labyrinth, stifled with the atmosphere and almost dead, some of them, when they came out to the river Seine, where they washed themselves and again breathed the fresh air. But I have to tell you that a great many of the men who go on the work of exploration through the underground gutters of life, never come out at any Seine river where they can wash off the pollution of the


JEAN PAUL MARAT, THE JACOBIN.

moral sewerage. Stranger, if one of the "drummers" of the city, as they are called—if one of the "drummers" propose to take you and show you the "sights" of the town say to him: ''Please, sir, what part do you propose to show me?''

Sabbath morning comes. You wake up in the hotel. You have had a longer sleep than usual. You say: "Where am I? a thousand miles from home! I have no family to take to church to-day. My pastor will not expect my presence. I think I shall look over my accounts and study my memorandum-book. Then I will write a few business letters, and talk to that merchant who came in on the same train with me." Stop! you cannot afford to do it. "But," you say, "I am worth five hundred thousand dollars." You cannot afford to do it. You say: "I am worth a million dollars." You cannot afford to do it. All you gain by breaking the Sabbath you will lose. You will lose one of three things: your intellect, your morals, or your property, and you cannot point in the whole earth to a single exception to this rule. God gives us six days and keeps one for himself. Now, if we try to get the seventh, he will upset the work of all the other six.

I remember going up Mount Washington, before the railroad had been built, to the Tip-Top House, and the guide would come around to our horses and stop us when we were crossing a very steep and dangerous place, and he would tighten the girdle of the horse, and straighten the saddle. And I have to tell you that this road of life is so steep and full of peril we must, at least one day in seven, stop and have the harness of life re-adjusted, and our souls re-equipped. The seven days of the week are like seven business partners, and you must give to each one his share, or the business will be broken up. God is so generous with us; he has given us six days to his one. Now, here is a father who has seven apples, and he gives six to his greedy boy, proposing to keep one for himself. The greedy boy grabs for the other one and loses all the six.

How few men there are who know how to keep the Lord's day away from home. A great many who are consistent on the banks of the St. Lawrence, or the Alabama, or the Mississippi, are not consistent when they get so far off as the East River. I repeat—though it is putting it on a low ground—you cannot financially afford to break the Lord's day. It is only another way of tearing up your government securities, and putting down the price of goods, and blowing up your store. I have friends who are all the time slicing off pieces of the Sabbath. They cut a little of the Sabbath off that end, and a little of the Sabbath off this end. They do not keep the twenty-four hours. The Bible says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." I have good friends who are quite accustomed to leaving Albany by the midnight train on Saturday night, and getting home before church. Now, there may be occasions when it is right, but generally it is wrong. How if the train should run off the track into the North River? I hope your friends will not send for me to preach your funeral sermon. It would be an awkward thing for me to stand up by your side and preach—you a Christian man killed on a rail-train traveling on a Sunday morning. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." What does that mean? It means twenty-four hours. A man owes you a dollar. You don't want him to pay you ninety cents; you want the dollar. If God demands of us twenty-four hours out of the week, he means twenty-four hours and not nineteen. Oh, we want to keep vigilantly in this country the American Sabbath, and not have transplanted here the German or the French Sabbath. If any of you have been in Paris you know that on Sabbath morning the vast population rush out toward the country with baskets and bundles, and toward night they come back fagged out, cross, and intoxicated. May God preserve to us our glorious, quiet American Sabbaths.

And so men come to the verge of city life and say: "Now we'll look off. Come, young man, don't be afraid. Come near, let's look off." He looks and looks, until, after a while, Satan comes and puts a hand on each of his shoulders and pushes him off. Society says it is evil proclivity on the part of that young man. Oh, no, he is simply an explorer, and sacrificed his life in discovery. A young man comes in from the country bragging that nothing can do him any harm. He knows about all the tricks of city life. "Why," he says, "didn't I receive a circular in the country telling me that somehow they found out that I was a sharp business man, and if I would only send a certain amount of money by mail or express, charges prepaid, they would send a package with which I could make a fortune in two months; but I didn't believe it. My neighbors did, but I didn't. Why, no man could take my money. I carry it in a pocket inside my vest. No man could take it. No man could cheat me at the faro table. Don't I know all about the 'cue-box,' and the 'dealer's-box,' and the cards stuck together as though they were one, and when to hand in my cheques? Oh, they can't cheat me. I know what I am about." While, at the same time, that very moment, such men are succumbing to the worst Satanic influences, in the simple fact that they are going to observe. Now, if a man or woman shall go down into a haunt of iniquity for the purpose of reforming men and women—if, as did John Howard, or Elizabeth Fry, or Van Meter, they go down among the abandoned for the sake of saving souls—or as did Chalmers and Guthrie to see sin, that they might better combat it, then they shall be God-protected, and they will come out better than when they went in. But if you go on this work of exploration, merely for the purpose of satisfying a morbid curiosity, it will take twenty per cent. off your moral character. O, strangers, welcome to the great city. May you find Christ here, and not any physical or moral damage. Men coming from inland, from distant cities, have here found God. May that be your case. You thought you were brought to this place merely for the purpose of sight-seeing. Perhaps God brought you to the roaring city for the purpose of working out your eternal salvation. Go back to your homes and tell them how you met Christ here—the loving, patient, pardoning, and sympathetic Christ. Who knows but the city which has been the destruction of so many may be your eternal redemption?

A good many years ago, Edward Stanley, the English commander, with his regiment, took a fort. The fort was manned by some three hundred Spaniards. He came close up to the fort, leading his men, when a Spaniard thrust at him with a spear, intending to destroy his life; but Stanley caught hold of the spear, and the Spaniard in attempting to jerk it away, lifted him into the battlements. No sooner had Stanley taken his position on the battlements, than he swung his sword and his whole regiment leaped up after him and the fort was taken. So may it be with you. The city pitfalls which have destroyed so many and dashed them down for ever, shall be the means of lifting you up into the tower of God's mercy and strength, your soul more than conqueror through His grace.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!

People will have a god of some kind, and they prefer one of their own making. The Israelites broke off their golden ear-rings, the men as well as the women, for in those times there was masculine as well as feminine decoration. Where did they get these beautiful gold ear-rings, coming up as they did from the desert? Oh, they borrowed them of the Egyptians, when they left Egypt. These ear-rings were piled into a pyramid of glittering beauty. "Any more ear-rings to bring?" says Aaron. None. Fire is kindled; the ear-rings are melted and poured into a mould, not of an eagle or a war charger, but of a silly calf; the gold cools down; the mould is taken away, and the idol is set up on its four legs. An altar is built in front of the shining calf. Then the people throw up their arms, and gyrate, and shriek, and dance vigorously, and worship.

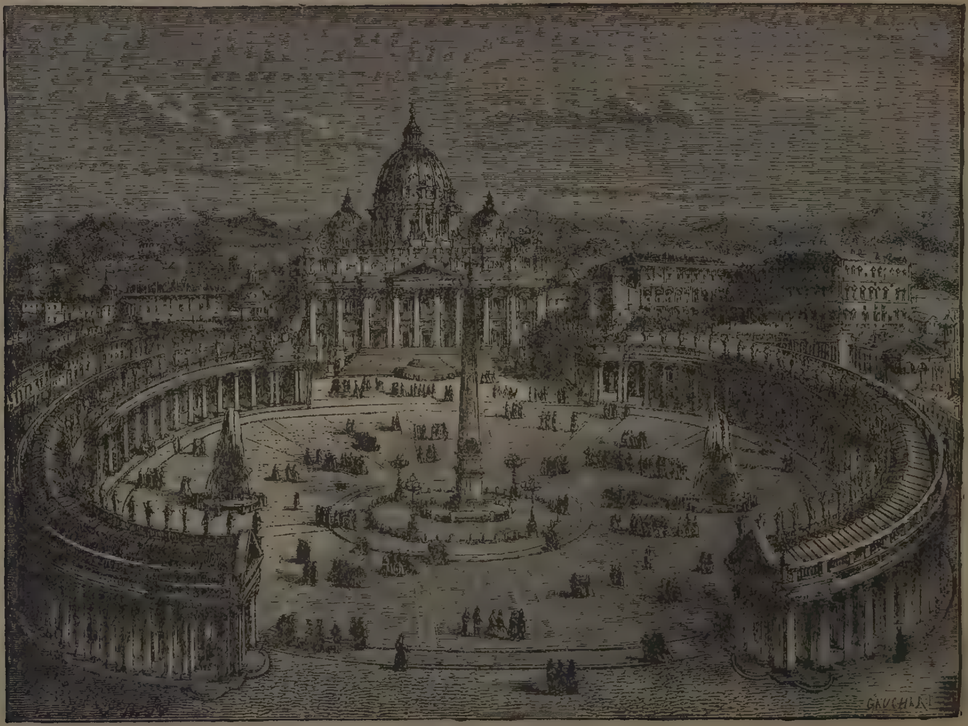
Moses had been six weeks on Mount Sinai, and he came back, and heard the howling and saw the dancing of these fanatics, and he lost his patience, and he took the two plates of stone, on which were written the Ten Commandments, and flung them so hard against a rock that they split all to pieces. When a man gets mad he *is apt to break all the Ten Commandments!* In this instance Moses rushes in, and he takes this calf-god and throws it into a hot fire, until it is melted all out of shape, and then pulverizes it—not by the modern appliance of nitro-muriatic acid, but by the ancient appliance of nitre or by the old-fashioned file. He stirs for the people a most nauseating draught. He takes this pulverized golden calf and throws it in the only brook which is accessible, and the people are compelled to drink of that brook or not drink at all.

But they did not drink *all* the glittering stuff thrown on the surface. Some of it flows on down the surface of the brook to the river, and then flows on down the river to the sea, and the sea takes it up and bears it to the mouth of all the rivers, and when the tides set back, the remains of this golden calf are carried up into the Hudson and the East River, and the Thames, and the Clyde, and the Tiber, and men go out and they skim the glittering surface, and they bring it ashore, and they make another golden god, and California and Australia break off their golden ear-rings to augment the pile, and in the fires of financial excitement and struggle, all these things are melted together, and while we stand looking and wondering what will come of it, lo! we find that the golden calf of Israelitish worship has become the golden god of European and American worship.

Pull aside the curtain and you see our modern idolatry. It is not, like other idols made out of stocks or stone, but it has an *ear* so sensitive that it can hear the whispers on Wall Street and Third Street and State Street, and the footfalls in the Bank of England, and the flutter of a Frenchman's heart on the Bourse. It has an *eye* so keen that it can see the rust on the farm of Michigan wheat, and the insect in the Maryland peach-orchard, and the trampled grain under the hoof of the Russian war-charger. It is so mighty that it swings any way it will the world's shipping. It has its foot on all the merchantmen and the steamers. It started the American civil war, and under God, stopped it; and it decided the Turco-Russian contest. One broker in September, 1869, in New York, shouted, "One hundred and sixty for a million!" and the whole continent shivered. The idol of the Israelites has its right front foot in New York, its left front foot in Chicago, its right back foot in Charleston, its left back foot in New Orleans, and when it shakes itself it shakes the world. Oh, this gold is the mighty god of the world's worship.

But every god must have its temple, and this gold is no exception. Its temple is vaster than St. Paul's Cathedral in England, and St. Peter's in Italy, and the Alhambra of the Spaniards, and the Parthenon of the Greeks, and the Taj Mahal of the Hindoos, and all the other cathedrals put together. Its pillars are grooved and fluted with gold, and its ribbed arches are hovering gold, and its chandeliers are descending gold, and its floors are tessellated gold, and its vaults are crowded heaps of gold, and its spires and domes are soaring gold, and its organ-pipes are resounding gold, and its pedals are tramping gold, and its stops pulled out are flashing gold, while standing at the head of the temple, as the presiding deity, are the feet and shoulders and eyes and ears and nostrils of the miser. Its altar is not made of stone as other altars, but out of counting-room desks and fire-proof safes, and it is a broad, a long, a high altar. The victims sacrificed on it are the Swartouts, and the Ketchams, and the Fisks, and the Tweeds, and the Mortons, and ten thousand other people who are slain before this god. What does it care about the groans and struggles of the victims before it? With cold, metallic eye it looks on and yet lets them suffer.

O heavens and earth, what an altar! what a sacrifice of mind, body, and soul! The physical health of a great multitude is flung on to this sacrificial altar. They cannot sleep, and they take chloral and morphine and intoxicants. Some of them struggle in a nightmare of stocks, and at one o'clock in the morning suddenly rise up shouting, "A thousand shares of New York Central—one hundred and eight and a half! take it!"—until the whole family is affrighted, and the speculators fall back on their pillow and sleep until they are awakened again by a "corner" in Pacific Mail or a sudden "rise" of Rock Island. Their nerves gone, their



ST. PETER'S, ROME.

digestion gone, their brain gone, they die. The gowned ecclesiastic comes in and reads the funeral service: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Mistake. They did not "die in the Lord;" their golden idol killed them!

The trouble is, when men sacrifice themselves on this altar they not only sacrifice themselves, but they sacrifice their families. If a man by an ill course is determined to go to perdition, I suppose you will have to let him go. But he puts his wife and children in an equipage that is the amazement of the avenues, and the driver lashes the horses into two whirlwinds, and the spokes flash in the sun, and the golden headgear of the harness gleams, until a black calamity takes the bits of the horses and stops them, and shouts to the luxuriant occupants of the equipage, "Get out!" They get out. They get down. That husband and father flung his family so hard they never got up. There was the mark on them for life—the mark of a sacrifice to an unfeeling god.

Solomon offered in one sacrifice, on one occasion, twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep; but that was a tame sacrifice compared with the multitude of men who are *sacrificing themselves* on the altar of gold, and sacrificing their families with them. The soldiers of General Havelock, in India, walked literally ankle deep in the blood of "the house of massacre," where two hundred white women and children had been slain by the Sepoys; but the blood around about this altar of gold flows up to the knee, flows up to the girdle, flows to the shoulder, flows to the lip. Great God of heaven and earth, have mercy on those who immolate themselves on this altar! *Gold has none.*

Still the degrading worship goes on, and the devotees kneel and kiss the dust, and count their golden beads, and cross themselves with the blood of their own sacrifice. The music rolls on under the arches; it is made of clinking silver and clinking gold, and the rattling specie of the banks and brokers' shops, and the voices of all the exchanges. The soprano of the worship is carried by the timid voices of men who have just begun to speculate, while the deep bass rolls out from those who for ten years have been steeped in the seething cauldron. Chorus of voices rejoicing over what they have made; chorus of voices wailing over what they have lost. This temple of which I speak stands open day and night, and there is the glittering god and broken hearts, and there is the smoking altar of sacrifice, new victims every moment on it, and there are the kneeling devotees, and the doxology of the worship rolls on, while death stands with moldy and skeleton arm, beating time for the chorus—More gold! more gold! more gold!

Some people are very much surprised at the actions of people in the Stock Exchange, New York. Indeed, it is a scene sometimes that paralyzes description, and is beyond the imagination of any one who has never looked in. What snapping of finger and thumb, and wild gesticulation, and raving like hyenas, and stamping like buffaloes, and swaying to and fro, and jostling and running one upon another, and deafening uproar, until the president of the Exchange strikes with his mallet four or five times, crying, "Order! order!" and the astonished spectator goes out into the fresh air, feeling that he has escaped from pandemonium. What does it all mean? I will tell you what it means. The devotees of every heathen temple cut themselves to pieces, and yell, and gyrate. This vociferation and gyration of the Stock Exchange is all appropriate. This is their worship. But this worship has got to be broken up, as the behavior of Moses indicated. There are those who say that that golden calf was hollow, and merely plated with gold; otherwise, Moses could not have carried it. I do not know that; but somehow, perhaps, by the assistance of his friends, he takes up the golden calf, which is an infernal insult to God and man, and throws it into the fire, and it is melted; and then it comes out and is cooled off, and, by some chemical appliance, or by an old-fashioned file, it is pulverized, and it is thrown into the brook, and, as a punishment, the people are compelled to drink the nauseating stuff. So, my readers, you may depend upon it that God will burn and He will grind to pieces the god of modern idolatry, and He will compel the people in their agony to drink it. If not before, it will be so on the last day. I know not where the fire will begin, but it will

THE GREED FOR GOLD.

be a very hot blaze. All the government securities of the United States and Great Britain will curl up in the first blast. All the money-safes and depositing-vaults will melt under the first touch. The sea will burn like tinder, and the shipping will be abandoned forever. The melting gold in the broker's window will burst through the melted window-glass into the street; but the flying population will not stop to scoop it up. The cry of "Fire!" from the mountain will be answered by the cry of "Fire!" in the plain. The conflagration will burn out from the continent toward the sea, and then burn in from the sea toward the land.

New York and London, with one cut of the red scythe of destruction, will go down. Twenty-five thousand miles of conflagration! The earth will wrap itself round and round in shroud of flame, and lie down to perish. What then will become of your god? Who then so poor as to worship it? Melted, or between the upper and the nether millstone of falling mountains ground to powder. Dagon down; Moloch down; Juggernaut down; gold down!

But every day is a day of judgment, and God is all the time grinding to pieces the golden god. Merchants, what is the characteristic of this time in which we live? "Bad," you say. Professional men, what is the characteristic of the times in which we live? "Bad," you say. Though I should be in a minority of one, I venture the opinion that these are the best times we have had in fifteen years, for the reason that God is teaching this nation, as never before, that old-fashioned honesty is the only thing that will stand.

A few years ago, in the panic, we learned, as never before, that forgeries will not pay; that the watering of stock will not pay; that the spending of $50,000 on country seats and a palatial city residence, when there are only $30,000 income, will not pay; that the appropriation of trust funds to our own private speculation will not pay. We had a great national tumor, in the shape of fictitious prosperity. We called it national enlargement; instead of calling it enlargement, we might better have called it a swelling. It was a tumor and God cut it out; and the nation was sent back to the principles of our fathers and grandfathers, when twice three made six instead of sixty, and when the apples at the bottom of the barrel were just as good as the apples on the top of the barrel, and a silk handkerchief was not half cotton, and a man who wore a five-dollar coat paid for was more honored than a man who wore a fifty-dollar coat not paid for.

The modern god is very apt to be made out of borrowed gold. These Israelites borrowed the ear-rings of the Egyptians, and then melted them into a golden calf. That is the way the god of gold is made nowadays. A great many housekeepers, not paying for the articles they get, borrow of the grocer and the baker and the butcher and the dry-goods seller. Then the retailers borrow of the wholesale dealer. Then the wholesale dealer borrows of the capitalist; and we borrow, and borrow, and borrow, until the community is divided into two classes—those who borrow and those who are borrowed of; and after a while the capitalist wants his money and he rushes upon the wholesale dealer, and the wholesale dealer wants his money and he rushes upon the retailer, and the retailer wants his money and he rushes on the consumer, and we all go down together.

There is many a man who rides in a carriage and owes the blacksmith for the tire, and the wheelwright for the wheel, and the trimmer for the curtain, and the driver for unpaid wages, and the harness-maker for the bridle, and the furrier for the robe, while from the tip of the carriage-tongue clear back to the tip of the camel's-hair shawl fluttering out of the back of the vehicle, everything is paid for by notes that have been three times renewed. I tell you that in this country we shall never get things right until we stop borrowing and pay as we go. It is this temptation to borrow, and borrow, and borrow that keeps the people everlastingly praying to god of gold for help, and just at the minute they expect the help their god treads on them.

The judgments of God will rush in and break up this worship; and I say, let the work go on until every man shall learn to speak truth with his neighbor, and those who make engagements shall feel themselves bound to keep them, and when a man who will not repent of his business iniquity, but goes on wishing to satiate his cannibal appetite by devouring widows' houses, shall, by the law of the land, be compelled to exchange the brown stone front for the Penitentiary. Let the worship of gold perish!

CHAPTER XXVII.

ONE THING THOU LACKEST.

The young man was a splendid nature. We fall in love with him at the first glance. He was amiable and frank and earnest and educated and refined and respectable and moral, and yet he was not a Christian. And so Christ addressed him in these words: "One thing thou lackest." I suppose that they were no more appropriate to that young man than to a great multitude of people. There are many things in which you are not lacking. For instance, you are not lacking in a good home. The younger children of the house already asleep, the older ones, hearing your returning footsteps, rush to the door to meet you. And when the winter evenings come, and the children are at the stand with their lessons, the wife is plying the needle, and you are reading the book or the paper, you will feel that you have a good home. Neither are you lacking in the refinements and courtesies of life. You understand the polite phraseology of invitation, regards and apology. I hope at church you have on your best apparel. I shall wear no better dress at the wedding than when I come to the marriage of the King's Son. If I am well clothed on other occasions, I will be in the house of God. However reckless I may be about my personal appearance at other times, when I come into a consecrated assemblage I shall have on the best dress I have. We all understand the proprieties of everyday life and the proprieties of Sabbath life. Neither are you lacking in worldly success. You have not made as much money as you would like to make, but you have an income. While others are false when they say they have no income or are making no money, you have never told that falsehood. You have had a livelihood or you have fallen upon old resources, which is just the same thing, for God is just as good to us when He takes care of us by a surplus of the past as by present success.

LAUDERBACH SC.

A HAPPY FATHER.

While there are thousands of men with hunger tearing at the throat with the strength of a tiger's paw, not one of you is hungry. Neither are you lacking in pleasant friendships. You have real good friends. If the scarlet fever should come to your house, you know very well who would come in and sit up with the sick one; or, if death should come, you know who would come in and take your hand tight in theirs with that peculiar grip which means, "I'll stand by you," and after the life has fled from the loved one, take you by the arm and lead you into the next room, and while you are gone to the burying ground they would stay in the house and put aside the garments and the playthings that might bring to your mind too severely your great loss. Friends? You all have friends. Neither are you lacking in your admiration of the Christian religion. There is nothing that makes you so mad as to have a man malign Christ. You get red in the face and you say: "Sir, I want you to understand that though I am not myself a Christian, I don't like such things as that said in my store," and the man goes off, giving you a parting salutation, but you hardly answer him. You are provoked beyond all bounds.

Many of you have been supporters of religion and have given more to the cause of Christ than some who profess His faith. There is nothing that would please you more than to see your son or daughter standing at the altars of Christ, taking the vows of the Christian. It might be a little hard on you, and might make you nervous and agitated for a little while; but you would be man enough to say: "My child, that is right. Go on. I am glad you haven't been kept back by my example. I hope some day to join you." You believe all the doctrines of religion. A man out yonder says: "I am a sinner." You respond: "So am I." Some one says: "I believe that Christ came to save the world." You say: "So do I." Looking at your character, at your surroundings, I find a thousand things about which to congratulate you; and yet I must tell you in the love and fear of God, and with reference to my last account: "One thing thou lackest."

You need, in the first place, the element of happiness. Some day you feel wretched. You do not know what is the matter with you. You say: "I did not sleep last night. I think that must be the reason of my restlessness;" or, "I have eaten something that did not agree with me, and I think that must be the reason." And you are unhappy. O, my friends, happiness does not depend upon physical condition. Some of the happiest people I have ever known have been those whose have been wrapped in consumption, or paralyzed with neuralgia, or burning with the slow fire of some fever. I never shall forget one man who, in excruciation of body, cried out: "Mr. Talmage, I forget all my pain in the love and joy of Jesus Christ. I can't think of my sufferings when I think of Christ." Why, his face was illuminated. I shall never forget it. There are young men who would give testimony to show that there is no happiness outside of Christ, while there is great joy in His service. There are young men who have not been Christians more than six months, who would stand up and say that in those six months they have had more joy and satisfaction than in all the years of their frivolity and dissipation. Go to the door of that gin-shop, and when the gang of young men come out, ask them whether they are happy. They laugh along the street, and they cheer and they shout, but nobody has any idea that they are happy.

I could call upon aged men to give testimony. There are aged men who tried the world, and they tried religion, and they are willing to testify on our side. It was not long ago that one man arose in a praying circle, and said: "Brethren, I lost my son just as he graduated from college, and it broke my heart; but I am glad now he is gone. He is at rest, escaped from all sorrow and from all trouble. And then, in 1857, I lost all my property, and you see I am getting a little old, and it is rather hard upon me; but I am sure God will not let me suffer. He has not taken care of me for seventy-five years now to let me drop out of His hands." I went into the room of an aged relative not long ago—his eye-sight nearly gone, his hearing nearly gone—and what do you suppose he was talking about? The goodness of God and the joys of religion. He said: "I would like to go over and join my wife on the other side of the flood, and I am waiting until the Lord calls me. I am happy now. I shall be happy there." What is it that gives that aged man so much satisfaction and peace? Physical exuberance? No; it has all gone. Sunshine? He cannot see it. The voices of friends? He cannot hear them. It is the grace of God, that is brighter than sunshine and that is sweeter than music. If a harpist takes a harp and finds that all the strings are broken but one string, he does not try to play upon it. Yet here I will show you an aged man, the strings of whose joy are all broken save one, and yet he thrums it with such satisfaction, such melody, that the angels of God stop the swift stroke of their wings, and hover about the place until the music ceases. O, religion's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And if you have not the satisfaction that is to be found in Jesus Christ, I must tell you, with all the concentred emphasis of my soul, "One thing thou lackest."

You lack the elements of usefulness. Where is your business? You say it is No. 45 such a street, or No. 260 such a street, or No. 300 such a street. My friend immortal, your business is wherever there is a tear to be wiped away or a soul to be saved. You may before coming to Christ do a great many noble things. You take a loaf of bread to that starving man in the alley; but he wants immortal bread. You take a pound of candles to that dark shanty. They want the light that springs from the throne of God, and you cannot take it because you have it not in your own heart. You know that the flight of an arrow depends very much upon the strength of the bow, and I have to tell you that the best bow that was ever made, was made out of the Cross of Christ; and when Religion takes a soul and puts it on that, and pulls it back and lets it fly, every time it brings down a Saul or Goliath. There are people of high social position and large means and cultured minds, who, if they would come into the kingdom of God, would set the city on fire with religious awakening. O, hear you not the myriad voices of those who are dying in their sins? They want light. They want bread. They want Christ. They want heaven. O, that the Lord would make you a flaming evangel. As for myself, I have sworn before high heaven that I will preach this Gospel as well as I can, in all its fullness, until every fiber of my body and every faculty of my mind and every passion of my soul is exhausted. I ask no higher honor than that of dying for Him who died for me. But we all have a work to do. I cannot do your work, nor can you do my work. God points us out the place where we are to serve, and yet are there not people who are thirty, forty, fifty, and sixty years of age, and yet have not begun the great work for which they were created.

Again, you lack the element of personal safety. Where are those people who associated with you twenty years ago? Walk down the street where you were in business fifteen years ago, and see how all the signs have changed. Where are the people gone? How many of them are landed in eternity I cannot say, but many, many. A few days ago I went to the village of my boyhood. The houses were all changed. I passed one house in which once resided a man who had lived an earnest, useful life, and he is in glory now. In the next house a miser lived. He devoured widows' houses, and spent his whole life in trying to make the world worse and worse. And he is gone—the good man and the miser both gone to the same place. Ah, did they go to the same place? No, infinite absurdity to suppose them both in the same place. If the miser had a harp, what tune did he play on it? O my readers, I commend to you this religion as the only personal safety. When you die, where are you going to? When we leave all these scenes, upon what scenes will we enter? When we were on shipboard, and we all felt that we must go to the bottom, was I right in saying to one next me: "I wonder if we will reach Heaven if we do go down to-night." Was I wise or unwise in asking that question? I tell you that man is a fool who never thinks of the great future. If you pay money, you take a receipt. If you buy land, you record the deed. Why? Because, everything is so uncertain, you want it down in black and white, you say. For a house and lot twenty-five feet front by one hundred feet deep, all security; but for a soul, vast as eternity, nothing, nothing!

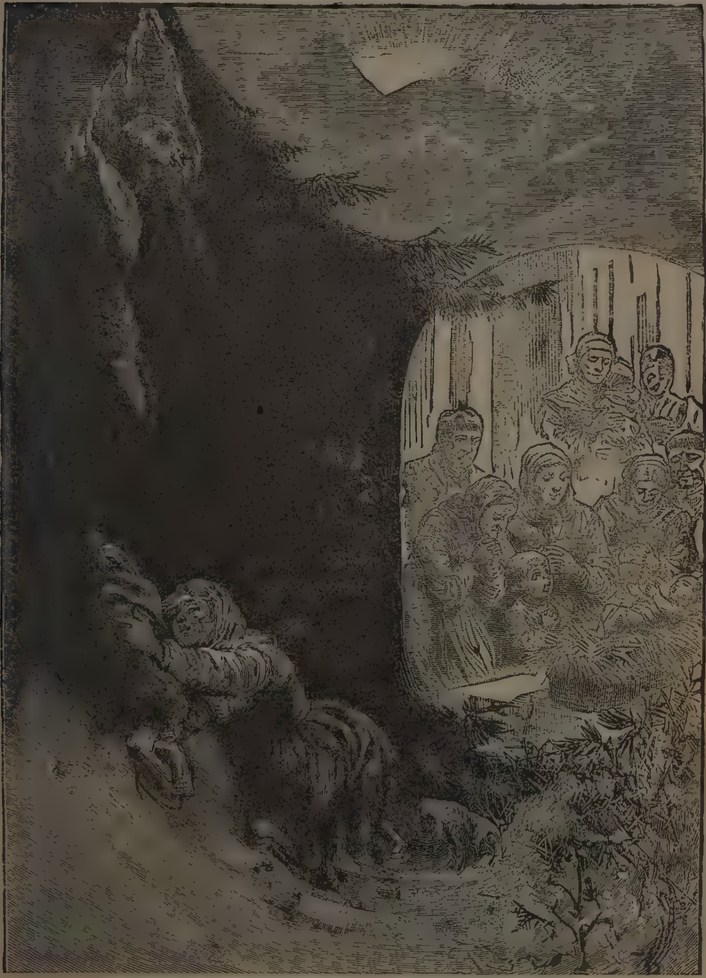
If some one of you should drop down dead, where would you go to? Which is your destiny? Suppose a man is prepared for the future world, what difference does it make to him whether he goes to his home or goes into glory? Only this difference: if he dies he is better off. Where he had one joy on earth, he will have a million in Heaven. When he has a small sphere here, he will have a grand sphere there. Perhaps it would cost you sixty, or one hundred, or one hundred and fifty dollars to have your physical life insured, and yet free of charge, I offer you insurance on your immortal life, payable, not at your decease, but now, and to-morrow, and every day, and always. My hope in Christ is not so bright as many Christians, I know; but I would not give it up for the whole universe, in one cash payment, if it were offered me. It has been so much comfort to me in time of trouble, it has been so much strength to me when the world has abused me, it has been so much rest to me when I have been perplexed, and it is around my heart such an encasement of satisfaction and blessedness that I can, before God, say: Take away my health, take away my life, take everything rather than rob me of this hope, this plain, simple hope which I have in Jesus Christ, my Lord. I must have this robe when the last chill strikes through me. I must have this light when all other lights go out in the blast that comes up from the cold Jordan. I must have this sword with which to fight my way through all those foes on my way heavenward. When I was in London I saw there the wonderful armor of Henry VIII. and Edward III. And yet there is nothing in chain mail or brass plate or gauntlet or halberd that makes a man so safe as the armor in which the Lord God clothes his dear children. O, there is safety in religion. You will ride down all your foes. Look out for that man who has the strength of the Lord God with him. In olden times the horsemen used to ride into battle with lifted lances, and the enemy fled the field. The Lord on the white horse of victory, and with lifted lances of divine strength, rides into the battle, and down goes the spiritual foe; while the victor shouts the triumph through the Lord Jesus Christ. As a matter of personal safety, you must have this religion.

I apply my subject to several classes of people. First, to the great multitude of young people in our cities. Some of these young men are in boarding-houses. They have but few social advatages. They think that no one cares for their souls. Many of them are on small salaries, and they are cramped and bothered perpetually, and sometimes their heart fails them. Young man, at your bedroom door on the third floor, you will hear a knocking. It will be the hand of Jesus Christ, the young man's friend, saying: "O, young man, let me come in; I will help thee, I will comfort thee, I will deliver thee." Take the Bible out of the trunk, if it has been hidden away. If you have not the courage to lay it on the shelf or table, take that Bible that was given to you by some loved one, take it out of the trunk and lay it down on the bottom of the chair, and kneel down beside it, and read and pray, and pray and read, until all your disturbance is gone, and you feel that peace which neither earth nor hell can rob you of. Thy father's God, thy mother's God, waits for thee, O young man. "Escape for thy life!" Escape now!

But I apply this subject to the aged—not many of them. People do not live to get old. That is the general rule. Here and there an aged man. I tell you the truth. You have lived long enough in this world to know that it cannot satisfy an immortal nature. I must write to you more reverentially than I do to these other people of my own age. We are told to rise up and do honor to the hoary head and to those who have seen long years; and so I must write with reverence, while at the same time with great plainness. O father of the weary step, O mother, bent down under the ailments of life, has thy God ever forsaken thee? Through all these years, who has been your best friend? Seventy years of mercies! Seventy years of food and clothing! O, how many bright mornings! How many glorious evening hours you have seen! O, father, mother, God has been very good to you. Do you feel it? Some of you have children and grandchildren; the former cheered your young life, the latter twine your gray locks in their tiny fingers. Has all the goodness that God has been making pass before you since long before I was born—has all that goodness produced no change in your feelings, and must it be said of you, notwithstanding all this, "One thing thou lackest?"

Oh, if you could only feel the hand of Christ smoothing the cares out of wrinkled faces. O, if you could only feel the arm of Christ steadying your tottering steps. It was an importunate appeal a young man made in a prayer-meeting when he rose up and said: "Do pray for my old father. He is seventy years of age, and he don't love Christ." That father passed a few more steps on in life and then he went down. He never gave any intimation that he had chosen Jesus. It is a very hard thing for an old man to become a Christian. I know it is. It is so hard a thing that it cannot be done by any human work; but God Almighty can do it by His omnipotent grace; He can bring you at the eleventh hour, at half-past eleven, at one minute to twelve He can bring you to the peace and the joys of the glorious Gospel.

I must make application of this subject, also, to those



"THOU WAST POOR, AND I AM POOR."—PAGE 358.

who are prospered. Have you found that dollars and cents are no permanent consolation to the soul? Have you in this world ten thousand dollars, twenty thousand dollars, thirty thousand dollars? Have you no treasures in heaven? Is an embroidered pillow all that you want to put your dying head on? You have heard people all the time talk about earthly values. Listen to a plain man about the heavenly. Do you know it will be worse for you, O prosperous man—if you reject Christ and reject Him finally—that it will be worse for you than those who had it hard in this world, because the contrast will make the discomfiture so much more appalling? As the hart bounds for the water brooks, as the roe speeds down the hill-side, speed thou to Christ. "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed!"

Then the poor. When you cannot pay your rent when it is due, have you nobody but the landlord to talk to? When the flour has gone out of the barrel, and you have not ten cents with which to go to the bakery, and your children tugging at your dress for something to eat, have you nothing but the world's charities to appeal to? When winter comes and there are no coals, and the ash-barrels have no more cinders, who takes care of you? Have you nobody but the overseer of the poor? If you do not have in the winter blankets enough to cover you in the night, I want to tell you of Him who had not where to lay His head. If you lay on the bare floor, I want to tell you of Him who had for a pillow a hard cross, and whose foot-bath was the streaming blood of His own heart. O you poor man! O you poor woman! Jesus understands your case altogether. Talk it right out to Him. Get down on your floor and say: "Lord Jesus Christ, Thou was poor, and I am poor. Help me. Thou art rich now, and bring me up to Thy riches!" Do you think God would cast you off? Will He? You might as well think that a mother would take the child that feeds on her breast and dash its life out, as to think that God would put aside roughly those who have fled to Him for pity and compassion.

Aye, the prophet says: "A woman may forget her sucking child, but I will not forget thee."

If you have ever been on the sea, you have been surprised in the first voyage to find there are so few sails in sight. Sometimes you go along, two, three, four, five, six, and seven days, and do not see a single sail; but when a vessel does come in sight, the sea glasses are lifted to the eye, the vessel is watched, and if it come very near, then the captain through the trumpet cries loudly across the water, "Whither bound?" So you and I meet on this sea of life. We come and we go. Some of us have never met before. Some of us will never meet again. But I hail you across the sea, and with reference to the last great day, and with reference to the two great worlds, I cry across the water, "Whither bound? Whither bound? For the eternal heaven or for the eternal hell?" Will you live with Christ in glory, or be banished away from Him? I know what service that craft was made for, but hast thou thrown overboard the compass? Is there no helm to guide it? Is the ship at the mercy of the tempest? Is there no gun of distress booming through the storm? With priceless treasures, with treasures aboard worth more than all the Indies, wilt thou never come up out of the trough of that sea? O Lord God, lay hold that man! Son of God, if Thou wert ever needed anywhere, Thou art needed here. There are so many sins to be pardoned. There are so many wounds to be healed. There are so many souls to be saved or lost. Help, Jesus! Help, Holy Ghost! Help, ministering angels from the throne! Help, all sweet memories of the past! Help, all prayers for our future deliverance! O, that now, in this the accepted time and the day of salvation, you would hear the voice of mercy and live. Taste and see that the Lord is gracious.

In the closing hour of the day, when everything in the house is so favorable, when everything is so still, when God is so loving, and heaven is so near, drop your sins and take

Jesus. Do not cheat yourself out of heaven. Do not do that. God forbid that at the last, when it is too late to correct the mistake, a voice should rise from the pillow or drop from the throne, uttering just four words—four dismal, annihilating words: "One thing thou lackest."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WISE MEN WHO PLAY THE FOOL.

There is one scene in the life of David that you may not have pondered. You have seen him with a harp playing the devil out of Saul; with a sling, smashing the skull of Goliath; with a sword, hacking to pieces the Philistines; with a scepter, ruling a vast realm; with a psalm, gathering all nations into doxology; but now we have David playing the fool. He has been anointed king, yet he is in exile and passing incognito among the Gathites. They begin to suspect who he is, and say: "I wonder if this is not the warrior King David? It looks like him. Is not this the man about whom they used to make poetry, and about whom they composed a dance, so that the maidens of the city, reeling now on one foot and now on the other, used to sing: 'Saul has slain his thousands, but David has slain his tens of thousands.' Yes, it is very much like David. It must be David. It is David." David, to escape their hands, pretends to be demented. He said within himself: "If I act crazily, then these people will not injure me. No one would be so much of a coward as to assault a madman."

So, one day, while these Gathites are watching David with increased suspicion, they see him standing by the door running his hands meaninglessly up and down the panels—scrabbling on the door as though he would climb up, his mouth wide open, drooling like an infant. I suppose the boys of the streets threw missiles at him, but the sober people of the town said: "This is not fair. Do you not see that he has lost his reason? Do not touch this madman. Hands off! hands off!"

So David escaped; but what an exhibition he made of himself before all the ages! There was a majesty in King Lear's madness after Regan and Goneril, his daughters, had persuaded him to banish their sister Cordelia, and all the friends of the drama have been thrilled with that spectacle. The craziness of Meg Merrilies was weird and imposing, and the most telling passage in Walter Scott's "Guy Mannering." There was a fascination about the insanity of Alexander Cruden, who made the best concordance of the Bible that the world ever saw — made it between the mad-houses. Some time ago, while I was visiting the Insane Asylum on Blackwell's Island, a demented woman came up to me and said, in most tragic style:

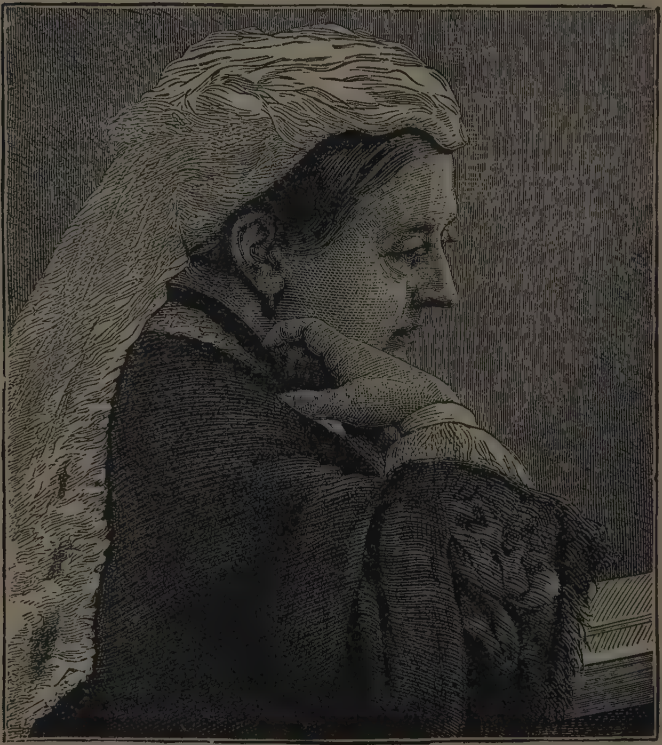
SIR WALTER SCOTT.

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

But there was nothing grand, nothing weird, nothing majestic, nothing sublime about this simulation on the part of David. Instead of trusting in the Lord, as he had on other occasions, he gathers before him a vast audience of all generations that were to come, and standing on that conspicuous stage of history, in the presence of all the ages, he impersonates the slavering idiot.

Taking the behavior of David as a suggestion, I wish to tell you how many of the wise and the brave, and the regal, sometimes play the fool. And in the first place I remark that those men as badly play the fool as did David, who, in any crisis of life, take their case out of the hand of God. David, in this case, acted as though there were no God to lift him out of the predicament. What a contrast between his behavior, when this brave little man stood up in front of the giant ten feet in height, looking into his face, between that time and this time, when he debased himself, and bedraggled his manhood, and affected insanity in order that he might escape from the grip of the Gathites. In the one case he played the hero. In the other case he played the fool. So does every man who, in the great crisis of life, takes his case out of the hand of God. The life of the most insignificant man is too vast for any human management. One time, returning from the West, I very easily got on the locomotive while passing over the plains, and talked with the engineer; but coming on toward the Allegheny Mountains, I thought I would like to sit on the locomotive as it came down from the mountains amidst that most wonderful scenery on this continent. I asked the engineer if I might ride, but he courteously denied me, for there the grade is so steep, and so winding, and so perilous, that he must not have any one on the locomotive who may divert his attention when eye and hand and foot and brain must be concentered, ready for the most sudden emergency. Life is so steep, and so perilous, and so exposed to sudden surprises, that none but the Lord Almighty can guide and engineer it, and our disasters come from the fact that we want to get up and help the Lord to manage the train.

Keep off the engine! Be willing to let God pull you where he wants to pull you. You have no right for an instant to surrender your sanity and manhood as David surrendered his. Put your trust in God, and he will take you through and over the mountains. I very much suspect that all the successful enterprises that were ever carried on, and all the successful lives that have ever been lived have been fully surrendered to God. When the girl Victoria was awakened in the night, and told that the throne of Great Britain was hers, she said to the prelate informing her: "I ask your prayers," and then and there they knelt down and prayed. Do you wonder that though since that time all the thrones of Europe have fallen or been fearfully shaken hers stands as firm as the day she ascended it; and in every country under the sun,



QUEEN VICTORIA.

wherever an Englishman hears that name pronounced, he feels like waving his hat and crying: "God save the Queen!" That man and that woman who put their trust in God will go through in triumph, while those who attempt to gathe under their own supervision the intricate and elaborate affairs of their lives are miserably playing the fool.

I stood on the beach, looking off upon the sea, and there was a strong wind blowing, and I noticed that some of the vessels were going that way, and other vessels were going another way. I said to myself: "How is it that the same wind sends one vessel in one direction and another vessel in another direction?" I found out, by looking, that it was the different way they had the sails set. And so does trouble come in this world. Some men it drives into the harbor of heaven, and other men it drives on the rocks. It depends upon the way you have your sails set. All the Atlantic and Pacific oceans of surging sorrow can not sink a soul that has asked for God's pilotage. The difficulty is, that when we have misfortunes of any kind, we put them in God's hand, and they stay there a little while, and then we go and get them again, and bring them back.

A vessel comes in from a foreign port. As it comes near the harbor it sees a pilot floating about. It hails the pilot. The pilot comes on board, and he says: "Now, captain, you have had a stormy passage. Go down and sleep, and I will take the vessel into New York harbor." After a while the captain begins to think: "Am I right in trusting this vessel to that pilot? I guess I'll go up and see." So he comes to the pilot and says: "Don't you see that rock? Don't you see those headlands? You will wreck the ship. Let me lay hold the helm for awhile for myself, and then I'll trust to you." The pilot becomes angry and says: "I will either take care of this ship or not. If you want to I will get into my yawl and go ashore or back to my boat." Now, we say to the Lord: "O, God, take my life, take my all, in thy keeping! Be thou my guide, be thou my pilot." We go along for a little while, and suddenly wake up and say: "Things are going all wrong. O, Lord, we are driving on these rocks and thou art going to let us be shipwrecked." God says: "You go and rest. I will take charge of this vessel and take it into the harbor."

It is God's business to comfort, and it is our business to be comforted. Herbert, the great thinker, philosophized about himself, philosophized about this world, philosophized about everything, then in his dying moments asked that only one word might be cut upon his tombstone and that word "Infelicissimus"—most unhappy—descriptive of the state of the lives and of the deaths of those who take their case out of the hands of God. The only appropriate inscription for their banqueting hall and their equipage, and their grave and the wall of their eternal prison-house—"Infelicissimus." In drooling, moral idiocy they are scrabbling at the door of their happiness, which never opens; miserably playing the fool.

All those persons play the fool, as certainly did David, who allow the technicalities of religion to stop their salvation. David was wise about a great many things, but his follies for a little while eclipsed his character. And I know wise men, and great men, competent for all other stations, who are acting a silly and foolish part in regard to the technicalities of religion. They ask us some questions which we cannot answer categorically, and so they burst into a broad guffaw, as though it is of any more interest to us than it ought to be to them. About the atonement, about God's decrees, about man's destiny, they ask a great many questions which we cannot answer, and so they deride us, as though we could not ask them a thousand questions that they cannot answer, about their eyes, about their ears, about their finger nails, about everything. A fool can ask a question that a wise man cannot answer. O, you caviling men! O, you profound men! O, you learned men, do please admit something. You have a soul? Yes. Will it live forever? Yes. Where? You say that Jesus Christ is not a divine Saviour. Who is he? Where will you go after you leave your law books, and your medical prescriptions, and your club-room, and your newspaper office—where will you go to? Your body will be six feet under ground. Where will your soul be? The black coat will be off, the shroud on. Those spectacles will be removed from your vision, for the sod will press your eyelids. Have you any idea that an earthly almanac describes the years of your lifetime? Of what stuff shall I gather the material for the letters of that word which describes your eternal home? Shall it be iron chain or amaranthine garland? The air that stirs the besweated locks of your dying pillow, will it come off a garden or a desert?

Oh, quit the puzzling questions and try these momentous questions. Quit the small questions and try these great questions. Instead of discussing whether the serpent in Eden was figurative or literal, whether the Mediterranean fish did or did not swallow the recreant prophet, whether this and that and the other thing is right or wrong, come and discuss one question: "How shall I get rid of my sins and win heaven?" That is the question for you. Yea, there have been men who have actually lost their souls because they thought there was a discrepancy between Moses and Prof. Silliman—because they could not understand how there could be light before the sun rose—the light appearing in verse three of Genesis, and the sun appearing not until verse sixteen—and because they do not know how the moon could stand still without upsetting the universe, and because they had decided upon the theory of natural selection. A German philosopher, in dying, had for his chief sorrow that he had not devoted his whole life to the study of the dative case. Oh, when your immortality is in peril, why quibble? Quit these non-essentials, my dear brother. In the name of God, I ask you in regard to these matters of the immortal soul that you do not play the fool.

What is that man doing in Bowling Green, New York? Well, he is going in for a ticket for a trans-Atlantic voyage. He is quarreling with the clerk about the spots—the red spots on the ticket—and he is quarreling about the peculiar signature of the president of the steamship company, and he is quarreling about the manner of the clerk who hands him the ticket. How long has he been standing there? Three weeks. Meanwhile, perhaps, twenty steamers have gone out of port, and he hears the shriek of the steam tug that could take him to the last vessel that could bear him to his engagement in London. Still he stands in Bowling Green discussing the ticket. What do you say in regard to that man? You say he is a fool. Well, in that very way are many men acting in regard to the matters of the soul. They are caviling about the atonement, the red spots on the ticket—about the character of the minister who hands them the ticket—about whether it has a divine or human signature, and, meanwhile, all their opportunities for heaven are sailing out of the harbor, and I hear the last tap of the bell announcing their last chance for heaven. Go aboard! Do not waste any more time in higgling, and carping, and criticising, and wondering, and, in the presence of an astounded heaven, playing the fool.

I go still further, and say to you that those men play the fool who undertake to pay out eternity for time. How little care do we bestow upon the railroad depot where we stop twenty minutes to dine. We dash in and dash out again. We do not examine the architecture of the building, nor the face of the caterer. We supply our hunger, we pay our money, and we put on our hat and take our place in the train. What is that depot as compared with the place for which we are bound? Now, my friends, this world is only a stopping place on the way to a momentous destination, and yet how many of us sit down as though we had consummated our journey, as though we had come to the final depot, when stopping here is as compared with our stopping there as is twenty minutes to twelve hours—yea, as the one hundredth part of a second compared with ten thousand million years! Would Spain sell us Cuba for a bushel of wheat? Would England sell us India for a ton of coal? Would Venice sell us all her pictures for an American school boy's sketch? Ah! that would be a better bargain for England, Spain and Venice than that man makes who gives his eternity for time. Yet how many there are who are saying to-day: "Give me the world's dollars and you may have the eternal rewards. Give me the world's applause and you may have the garlands of God. Give me twenty or forty or sixty years of worldly success, and I don't care what becomes of the future. I am going into that world uninsured. I take the responsibility. Don't bother me about your religion. Here I have the two worlds before me—this one and the next. I have chosen this. Go away from me, God and angels, and all thoughts of the future!"

But where is Crœsus, and Cleopatra, and Æsopas, who had one dish of food that cost one million four hundred thousand dollars; and Lentulus, who had a pond of fish worth one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars; and Scaurus, who bought a country seat for twenty nine million dollars; and Tiberius, who left at death a fortune of one hundred and eighteen million and one hundred and twenty thousand dollars? Where are they? If a windy day should blow all the dust that is left of them into your eyes it would not make you wink twice. Ah, my friends, then very certainly, your comforts of surrounding cannot keep back the old archer. You cannot charm him with music, or dazzle him with plate or decoy him with pictures or bribe him with your money

CLEOPATRA.

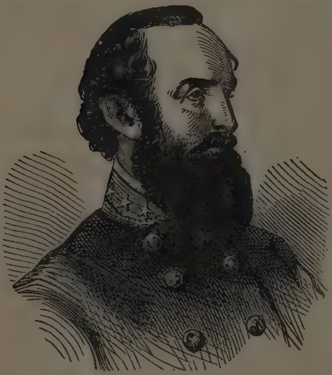
What is the use of your struggling for that which you cannot keep? As long as you have clothes and food and shelter, and education for yourselves and your children, and the means for Christian generosity, be satisfied. You worry, and tug, and sweat, and wear yourself out for that which cannot satisfy; whole flocks of crow's feet on your temples and cheeks before they ought to have come there. You are ten years older than you ought to be, and yet you cannot take along with you into the future world even the two pennies on your eyelids to keep them shut after you are dead. And yet you hold on to this world with the avidity of the miser who persisted in having his bonds and mortgages and notes of hand in the bosom of his dressing-gown while he was dying, and in the last moment held his parchment in such a tight grip that the undertaker after death must almost break the man's fingers in order to get the bonds away.

Men are actually making that choice, while there are others who have done far differently. When they tried to bribe with money Martin Luther, some one said: "There's no use trying to do that—that Dutch beast cares nothing for gold." When they tried by giving him a cardinal's hat to bribe Savonarola, he stood up in his pulpit and cried out: "I will have no red hat, save that of martyrdom, colored with my own blood." These men chose Christ amid great persecutions; but how many there are in this day, when Christianity seems to be popular; who are ashamed of Christ and not willing to take the hardships—the seeming hardships—of his religion! And, alas for them! for long after the crash of the world's demolition they shall find that in all these years they were turning their backs upon the palaces of heaven, scrabbling on the door of this world's treasure house, the saliva of a terrific lunacy on their lips—horribly and overwhelmingly playing the fool.

Once more I say to you that those men play the fool who, while they admit the righteousness of religion, set it down for future attendance. Do you know how many times the word "now" occurs in the Bible? Over two hundred times. One of the shortest words in the Bible, and yet one of the grandest in meaning and ramification. When does the Bible say is the best time to repent? Now. When does the Bible say that God will forgive? Now. When does God say is the only safe time to attend to matters of the soul? Now. But that word "now" melts away as easily as a snowflake in the evening rain. Where is the "now" of the dead of last year? the "now" of the dead of last month? the "now" of the dead of last week? the "now" of the dead of yesterday? Time picked it up in its beak and flew away with it. Swammerdam and other naturalists tell us there are insects which within the space of one minute are born, fulfill their mission, celebrate their nuptials, and die; but this wonderful "now" is more short-lived than they. It is a flash, a stroke, a glance. It's cradle is it's grave. If men catch it at all, it is with quick clutch. Millions of men have lost their soul immortal because they did not understand the momentum and the ponderosity of that one word. All the strategic powers of hell are exerted in trying to subtract from the energy and emphasis of that word. They say it is only a word of three letters, while there is a better word of eight letters "to-morrow." They say: "Throw away that small word and take this other grand one;" and so men say: "Give us 'to-morrow' and take away from us 'now;'" and between those two words is the Appian Way of death, and a great multitude throng that road, jostling and elbowing each other, hastening on swifter and swifter to die.

For how much would you walk the edge of the roof of your house? For how much would you come out on the most dangerous peak of the Matterhorn and wave your cap? You say: "No money could induce me to do it." And yet you stand to-day with one foot on a crumbling moment and the other foot lifted, not knowing where you will put it down, while the distance between you and the bottom of the depth beneath you no plummet can measure, no arithmetic calculate, no wing of lightning cleave. And yet, the Bible tells us that unless a man has a new heart he cannot get into heaven; and some of you are not seeking for that new heart. In Mexico, sometimes, the ground suddenly opens, and a man standing near the gap can see down an appalling distance. But, oh, if to-day, at your feet, there should open the chasms of the lost world, how you would fling yourself back and hold on and cry:

"God, save me—now! now! now!"


STONEWALL JACKSON.

I greet you, my brother, in the very gate of eternity. Some of us may live a longer, and some of us may live a shorter time; but, at the longest, life is so short that I feel we all stand on the door-sill of the great future. The next step—all the angels of God cannot undo the consequences. Will your exit from this life be a rising or a falling? The righteous go up. The Savior helps them. Ministering spirits meet them. The doors of paradise open to receive them. Up! up! up! O, what a grand thing it is to die with a strong faith in God, like that which Stonewall Jackson had, when, in his expiring moments, he said: "Let us cross over the river, and lie down under the shade."

But to leave this world unpreparedly is falling—falling from God, falling from hope, falling from peace, falling from heaven—swiftly falling, wildly falling, forever falling. So it was with one who had been eminent for his intelligence, but who had omitted all preparation for the future world, and had come down to his last hour. He said to his wife, seated by the bedside: "Oh, don't talk to me about pain; it is the mind, woman, it is the mind! Of all the years of my life, I never lived one minute for heaven. It is awfully dark here," he whispered; "it is awfully dark. I seem to stand on the slippery edge of a great gulf. I shall fall! I am falling!" And with a shriek, as when a man tumbles over a precipice, he expired. Wise for this world; about all the matters of his immortal soul he was, his life long, playing the fool. What do you think about the case of a man who has been all his life amid Bibles and churches, so that he knows his duty. Christ has offered to do all for that man that a divine Savior can offer to do for a dying soul. Heaven has been offered him, yes, been pushed upon him, and yet he has not accepted it, and he deliberately allows his chances for life to go away from him. What do you say of that one? "Hallucinated," says one; "Monomaniacal," says another; "Playing the fool," says another. O, how many there are taking just that position! There is such a thing as pyromania, an insanity which disposes one to destroy buildings by fire; but who would have thought there was a pyromania of the immortal nature, and that any one could be so struck through with that insanity as to have a desire and disposition to consume the soul.

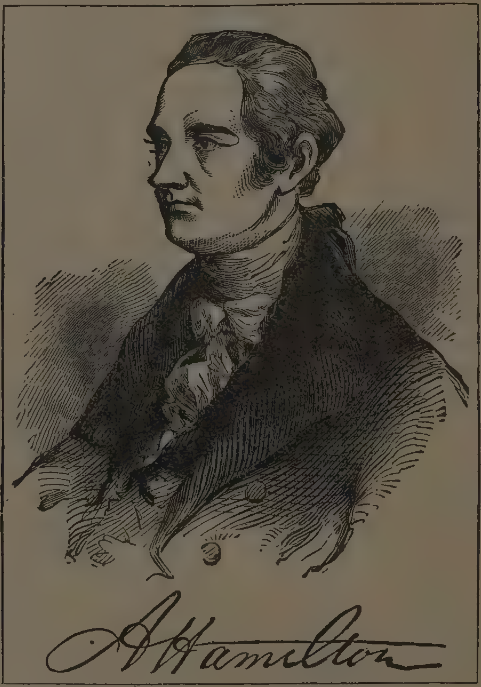
Awake, man! awake, woman! from the phantasia, real or affected. Take Christ. Escape for eternity. Just see what has been done for you. Lift the thorny cap from the brow of Jesus, and see the price that was paid for your liberation. Look at the side, and see where the spear went in and moved round and round, amid broken arteries, the blood rushing forth in awful sacrifice for your sins. O, wrap those bare and mutilated feet of the dying Lord in your womanly lap, for they were torn in a hard tramp for your soul! O, for tears to weep over this laceration of Christ! O, for a broken heart to worship him! O, for an omnipotent impulse strong enough to throw this whole country down at the feet of a crucified and risen Jesus! We must repent. We must believe. We must be saved. I can not consent to have you lose your souls. Come with me, and as in the summer time we go down to the beach and bathe in the waters, so to-day let us join hands and wade down into the summery sea of God's forgiveness. Roll over us, tides of everlasting love, roll over us! Dear Lord, we knock at the door of mercy, not as the demented knock, not knowing what they want, but knocking at the door of mercy, because we want to come in, while others run their meaningless hands up and down the panels, and scrabble at the gate, in the presence of God, and men, and angels, and devils, playing the fool.

CHAPTER XXIX.

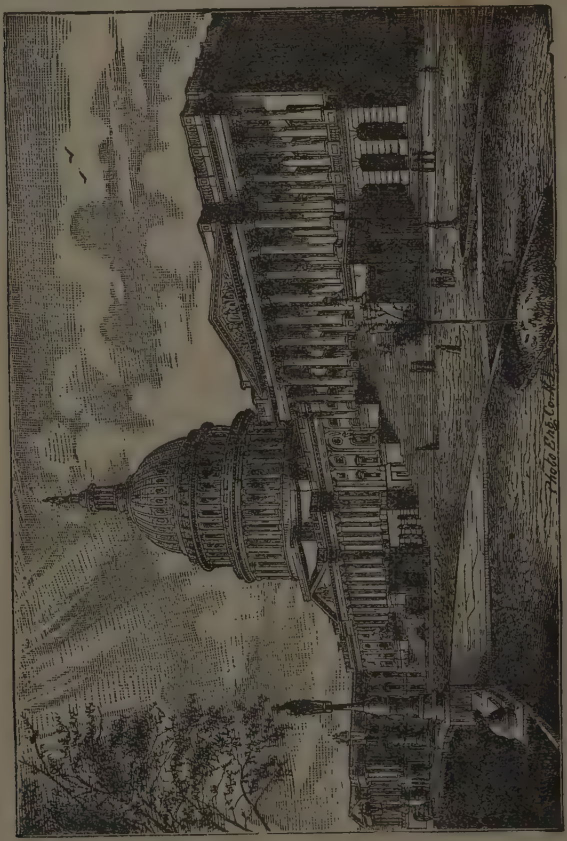
SINS OF THE CITY.

When Christian people shall have had the courage to look upon the sins of the city, and the courage to apply the gospel to those sins, then will come the time when so entirely free from ruffianism and vagabondism will all the streets of all the cities be, that the children, without any protection of police, or any parental anxiety, shall fly kite and play ball anywhere. "The streets of the cities shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." But before that time, oh, how much expurgation. I have laughed to see some of the American clergy run about with their hands full of court-plaster to cover up the sins that I have probed. A little green court-plaster for this, a little white court-plaster for that, a little blue court-plaster for something else. Ah! my friends, court-plaster can cover up, but it cannot cure. Not saying what my theory is in regard to the treatment of physical disease, in morals I am an allopathist, and I believe in giving a good stout dose to throw the ulcers to the surface, and then put on the salve of the old-fashioned gospel which Christ mixed to cure Bartimeus's blind eyes, and the young man who had fits, and the ten lepers, and the miseries of all generations.

There is no man on earth who has more exhilarant hope in regard to the moral condition and prosperity of our great American cities, but that hope is not based on apology or covering up, but upon exploration, exposure and Almighty medicament. After as thorough an examination as was possible, I tell you what I consider to be the moral condition of this country, as inferred from Washington, the city of official power; Boston, the city of culture; Philadelphia, the city of beautiful order; Chicago, the city of miraculous growth; New York, the city of commercial supremacy; Brooklyn, the city of homes. As the cities go, so goes the land. Who has moral barometer mighty enough to tell the influence of Cincinnati upon Ohio, or of Baltimore upon Maryland, or of Charleston upon South Carolina, or of New Orleans upon Louisiana, or of Louisville upon Kentucky, or of San Francisco upon California? Let me feel the pulse of the cities, and I will tell you the pulse of the land. God gives to every city, as to every individual, a mission. As our physical and



mental characteristics show what our personal sphere is, so topographical and historical facts show the mission of a city. Every city comes to be known for certain characteristics; Babylon for pride, Sparta for military prowess, Dresden for pictures, Rome for pontifical rule, Venice for architecture in ruins, Glasgow for shipbuilding, Edinburgh for learning, and London for being the mightiest metropolis of the world. Our American cities, of course, are younger, and therefore their characteristics are not so easily defined; but I think I have struck the right word in designation of each. Wrapped up and interlocked with the welfare and the very existence of this nation stands the city of Washington, on the Potomac—planted there by way of compromise. At the dining-table of Alexander Hamilton it was decided that if the South would agree that the National Government should assume the State debts, then the North would agree to have the capital on the Potomac instead of on the Delaware. So the capital went from Annapolis to Philadelphia, and from Philadelphia to Trenton, and from Trenton to New York, and then passed from New York to the Potomac, where it will stay until within a century it shall be planted on the banks of the Mississippi, or the Missouri, just as soon as the nation shall find out from the law of national growth that it is better to have the hub of a wheel at the center rather than at the rim of the tire. "Well," you say, "what's all that to me?" You have just as much to do with the city of Washington as your heart has to do with your body. Washington is the heart of the nation. If it send out good blood, good national health. If it send out bad blood, bad national sickness. It is to me one of the most fascinating cities in the world, and I wish to show you that it has come to a higher condition of morality than it has ever before reached. It is a city of palaces. He who has seen the Treasury buildings, and the National Post-office, and the Capitol, and the Department of State, has seen the grandest triumphs of masonry, architecture, painting and sculpture. I put the eight panels of the bronze door of the Capitol against the door of the Church of Madeleine, at Paris.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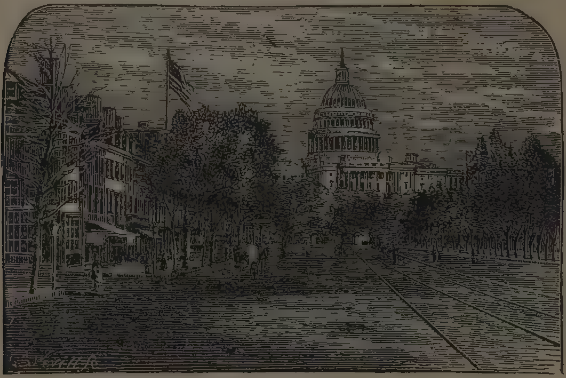
THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.

You talk about the works of the old masters. Go to Washington and see the works of the new masters: Leutz's "Westward Ho," Brumidi's frescoes, Greenough's Washington, Crawford's statue of Freedom. I put the white marble mountain of magnificence in which our Congress assembles against the Tuilleries and the Parliament houses of London. It is a city laid out more grandly than any city in the land. Mr. Ellicott by astronomical observations running the great boulevards from north to south, and from east to west. Every inch of its Pennsylvania avenue historical with the footsteps of Webster, and Clay, and Jackson, and Calhoun, and Washington. Hundreds of thousands of people along those streets vociferating at the inaugurations. Streets along which Charles Sumner moved out toward Mount Auburn, and Abraham Lincoln toward Springfield, the bells of the nation tolling at the obsequies, and the organs of the continent throbbing with the Dead March. City of huzza and requiem. City of patriotism and debauchery. City of national sacrifice and back pay. City of Senatorial dignity and corrupt lobby. City of Emancipation Proclamation and Credit Mobilier. City of the best men and the worst. City of Washington.

I have watched that city when Congress was in session and when Congress was away. The morals of the city are fifty per cent better when Congress is away. At that time, piety becomes more dominant. It is one of the woes of this country that so many national legislators leave their families at home. These distinguished men coming to Washington show the need of domestic supervisal. A man entirely absent from elevated female society is naturally a bear. Men are better at home than they are away from home. It is said that even ministers of the gospel during vacation sometimes go to the Saratoga horse-races. It is said that some members of Congress, faithful to their religious duties during vacation, during term time give the vacation to their religion. There are iniquities in Washington, however, not associated with office—iniquities that stay all the year round. Plenty of drinking establishments, plenty of hells of infamy, and the police in their attempts to keep order do not get as much encouragement as they ought from the courts and churches. On Christmas Day ten men in contest on Pennsylvania avenue, one of them shot dead, others bruised and mangled, the culprits brought before the District Attorney and let go. The sins rampant in New York and Brooklyn rampant in Washington. Two thousand dram-shops and grocery stores and apothecary shops where they sell strong drink—two thousand in Washington. Twelve thousand nine hundred and eighty-three arrests in one year. Over four thousand people in that city who neither read nor write. One hundred and twenty thousand dollars of stolen property captured by the police in a single year. All this suggestive to every intelligent mind. Washington wants more police. The beat of each policeman in Washington and Georgetown is on an average ten miles. Only nine mounted police in that vast city, which has rushed up in population and more than doubled in nine years. But oh! what an improvement since the day when the most flourishing liquor establishments were under the National Capitol, and Congressmen and Senators went there to get inspiration before they made their speeches, and went there to get recuperation afterward. Thanks to



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, WASHINGTON.

Henry Wilson and a few men like him for the overthrow of that abomination. During the war there were one hundred gambling-houses in the city of Washington; there were over five hundred professional gamblers there. One gambling-house boasted that in one year it had cleared over half a million of dollars. During one session of Congress the keeper of a gambling-house went to the Sergeant-at-Arms at the Capitol and presented an order for the greater part of the salary of many of the members, who had lost so heavily at the faro-table that they had thus to mortgage their salaries; and if now, when there are about twenty gambling-houses remaining in the city of Washington, you should go, you would find in those places clerks of departments, book-keepers, confidential and private secretaries; and if you should go to some of the more expensive establishments, near Pennsylvania avenue and Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, you would find in those gambling-houses members of Congress, officers of the army, gentlemen distinguished all the land over. It seems to me that the reporters of Washington are not as wide awake as our reporters, or they would give to the different States of the Union the names of the places where some of their great representatives in Congress are accustomed to spend their evenings. But what a vast improvement in the morals of that city! Dueling abolished. No more clubbing of Senators for opposite opinion. Mr. Covode, of Pennsylvania, no more brandishes a weapon over the head of Barksdale, of Mississippi. Grow and Heitt no more take each other by the throat. Griswold no more pounds Lyon, Lyon snatching the tongs and striking back until the two members in a scuffle roll on the floor of the great American Congress. Oh! there has been a vast improvement.

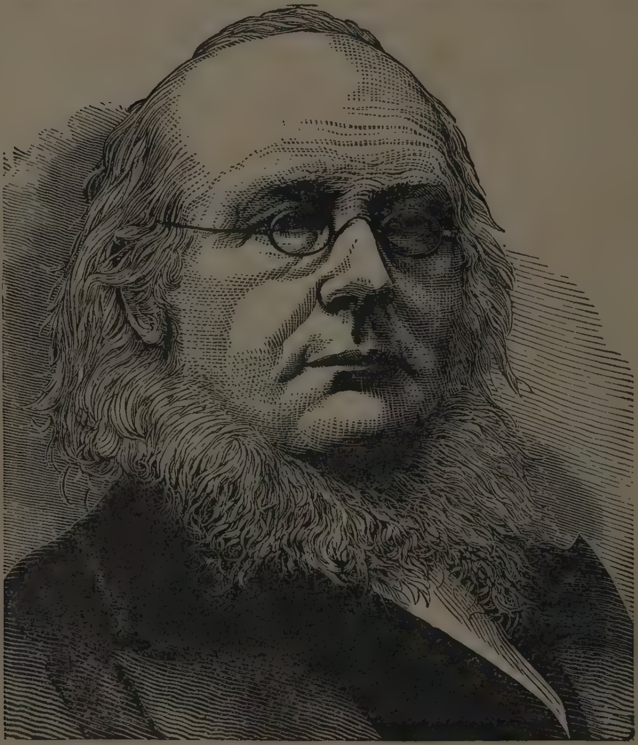
Is it not a matter of great congratulation that in late years there have been more thoroughly Christian men at the heads of Departments of State in Washington than at any time since the foundation of the Government, and that the wife of President Hayes, by her simplicity of wardrobe in the White House, put condemnation upon that extravagance of wardrobe which well-nigh shipwrecked some other administrations, and by the banishment of the wine-cup from State dinners showed to people in this country in high position that people may be jolly and yet be sober? Whatever may be your opinion in regard to politics, I have to tell you that there has never been less rum and tobacco, more Methodist hymn-books, or a higher style of personal morality among those in authority than at present.

I came back from my observations of the city of Washington impressed with two or three things. And first, while I would not have the question of a man's being a Christian or not a Christian brought into the political contest, I do demand that every man sent to Washington, or to any other place of authority, be a man of good morals. Will you send a blasphemer, as you have sometimes? Blasphemy is an indictable offense against the State. Will you send to Washington a man to make laws who breaks laws? Will you send an atheist? How can he swear to support the Constitution of the United States when there is no solemnity in an oath if there be no God? Will you send a man who indulges in games of chance, whether the amount be five hundred dollars or five cents? No. Gambling is denounced by the statute of every State. Will you send a libertine? Then you insult every family in the United States. Before you send a man to your City Hall, or your State Legislature, or to your national council, go through him with a lighted candle and find if he swear, if he lie, if he cheat, if he dishonor the family relation, if he keep bad company. If he does let him stay at home. Scratch his name off your ticket with the blackest ink, and put on a blot after. How dare you send such a man to a Congress where John Quincy Adams died, or to a Senate Chamber where Theodore Frelinghuysen sat, his face illumined with charity and heaven? No religious test, but a moral test, is demanded for every ballot-box in the city, State, and national elections. Years ago some men were sent to Congress—and I am sorry to say there are some of them left—who were walking charnel-houses. Nothing but a grave-digger's spade could free the world from their corruption. Some of them died of delirium tremens, and in a brothel. After they had been dead a little while, some member, for the purpose of giving a stone-cutter a lucrative job, moved that a large sum of city, State, or national funds be appropriated for building a monument. Now, I have no objections to such a monument to such a man, if you put on it the right kind of epitaph and uncover it in the right way. Let the uncovering of that monument be when an August thunder-storm is approaching. Let the blocks of marble of that monument be cut in the shape of the ivory "chips" in which the deceased patriot used to gamble. On the four corners of the pedestal of the monument, cut in marble, let there be wine-cup, flask, decanter, demijohn. Then gather around for the dedication of this monument the fragments of families whom he despoiled, and let them come, and on each block of marble let them drop a bitter tear; and then when the blackest fold of that August thunder-storm has wrapped the top of the monument in darkness, and when some man high in church or State, recreant to the truth, stands there delivering the eulogium, let the black cloud open and a bolt strike into dust the monumental infamy with a thunder which shall make all our American capitals quake with the reverberation: "The name of the wicked shall rot."

I came back from Washington with the impression that we need a great national religion. I do not mean a religion controlled by State officials, but I mean a religion dictated by a nation gospelized. I mean a religion mighty enough to control the morals of a nation. Old politicians will not be reformed. The undertakers must hurry up the funerals in these cases of political mortification. They will never be any better, those men. But gospelize the voters and then you will have gospelized officers of government. The pivot on which this nation turns is the ballot-box. Set that pivot on the Rock of Ages. There is only one being who can save this nation, and that is God. We talk a great deal about putting the name of God more thoroughly in the Constitution of the United States. Ah! my friends, it is not God in the Constitution that we want; it is God in the hearts of the people.

That test is going to come, if not in our time, then in the time of our children. There has been a good deal of discussion as to whether the battle of Lookout Mountain was really fought above the clouds. General Grant said no. General Hooker said yes. We will not go into that discussion; but I tell you that every battle in this country for ninety-eight years has been fought above the clouds, God and angels on our side. First came the war of the American Revolution. That was the birth-throe that ushered this nation into life. Then came the war of 1812. That was the infantile disease through which every child must go. Then came the war of 1861. That was the great typhoid which was to revolutionize the national system; and when this nation resumed specie payments, that was the settlement of the doctor's bill! Now let the nation march on in its grand career. Lord God of Bunker Hill, out of the trenches of Gettysburg, so long leading us with pillar of fire by night, give us the pillar of cloud by day, Lord God of Joshua, bring down the walls of opposition to this nation, at the blast of the Gospel trumpet. Lord God of Daniel, move around about us amid the leonine despotisms that growl for our destruction. Lord God of our fathers, make us worthy descendants of a brave ancestry. Lord God of our children, bring forth from the cradle of the rising generation a race to do better than we when our hand and voice are still. Then let all the rivers of this land flowing into the gulf, or into the Atlantic and Pacific seas, be rivers of salvation, and all the mountains, Olivets of truth and Pisgahs of prospect, and the mists rising from the lakes will be the incense of holy praise, and our cities will be so thoroughly evangelized that boys and girls will be found playing in the streets thereof.

Worldly greatness is a very transitory and unsatisfactory thing. Great men, I noticed in Washington, are great only a little while. The majority of those men whom you saw there ten or fifteen years ago are either in the grave or in political disgrace. How rapidly the wheel turns! Call the roll of Jeffersons's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Madison's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Monroe's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Pierce's Cabinet. Dead. Of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet, if I remember right, all dead but one, and he as good as dead. Call the roll of Grant's Cabinet. One or more of them worse than dead. The Congressional burying-ground in the city of Washington has one hundred and sixty cenotaphs planted in honor of members who died while in office; but they are only suggestive of a vaster congress departed. What is political honor in this country? As far as I can judge, it is the privilege of being away from home amid temptations that have slain the mightiest, bored to death by office-seekers, assaulted by meanest acrimony, and kicked into obscurity, with your health gone, when your time is out. One of the Senators of the United States dying in Flatbush Hospital, idiotic from his dissipations. One member of Congress I saw, years ago, seated drunk on the curbstone in Philadelphia, his wife trying to coax him home. A Congressman from New York, years ago, on a cold day, picked out of the Potomac, into which he had dropped through his intoxication, the only time when he ever came so near losing his life by too much cold water. Delaware had a Senator whose chief characteristic was he was always drunk. Illinois had a Senator celebrated in the same direction. Oh! my readers—and I say this especially to young men—there are so many temptations coming around all political honors, that before you seek them you had better see whether your morals are incorruptible. And I also point out to you the fact that American politics are most unfair to the most faithful and self-sacrificing men. I will never forgive American politics for the fact that it slew Horace Greeley. This country never saw a better patriot. His whole life was given to reform, making a magnificent record for his country, all his deeds of self-sacrifice and his brilliant intellectual achievements forgotten in one hour. There came a time when he felt that he, better than any



HORACE GREELEY.

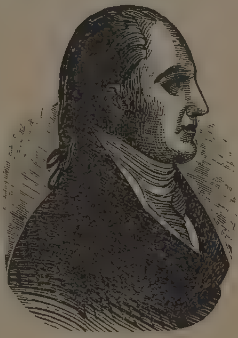
other man in the Presidential chair, could adjust the difficulties between the sections, and while he was talking about the North and the South "clasping hands across the bloody chasm," American politics pushed him into it. When American politics did that, it committed the greatest outrage of the century, and proved itself guilty of patricide, in the fact that it murdered a father, and of regicide in the fact that it slew a king. Oh! young men, look not for the honors of this world; look only for the honors that come from God. They never intoxicate. They never destroy. Crowns, thrones, scepters, dominions—will you have them? Did you ever hear Florence Rice Knox sing "The Lost Chord?" That song is founded on this beautiful idea. Some one sat at a piano or organ in reverie, fingers wandering among the keys, when she touched a chord of infinite sweetness that sent all her soul vibrating with comfort and with joy. But she kept that last chord of music only a moment. While she played she lost it, and for years she sought, but found it not. But one day she bethought herself, in a better country,—in heaven, among the minstrelsy of the saved,—she would find again that lost chord. If you have heard Florence Rice Knox sing "The Lost Chord," piano on one side, organ on the other side accompanying, then you have heard something most memorable. Our first parents in Paradise had happiness for a little while, and then missed it. Men have gone searching it through fame and applause and riches and emolument, but found it not. In all the ages it has eluded their grasp. It is the lost chord. Blessed be God, in Christ, our peace we find again, that which we could find nowhere else. He is the lost chord found. The symphony begins here amid our sorrows, which we must have comforted, and our sins, which we must have slain; but it will come to its mightiest music in the day when the baton of the eternal orchestra shall begin to swing, and we shall, like St. John in apocalyptic vision, hear the harpers harping with their harps. That will be the lost chord found.

CHAPTER XXX.

RESPONSIBILITY OF RULERS.

The morals of a nation seldom rise higher than the virtue of the rulers. Henry VIII. makes impurity popular and national. William Wilberforce gives moral tone to a whole empire. Sin bestarred and epauletted makes crime respectable and brings it to canonization. Malarias arise from the swamp and float upward, but moral distempers descend from the mountain to the plain. The slums only disgust men with the bestiality of crime, but dissolute French court or corrupt congressional delegation puts a premium upon iniquity. Many of the sins of the world are only royal exiles. They had a throne once, but they have been turned out, and they come down now to be entertained by the humble and the insignificant.

There is not a land on earth which has so many moral men in authority as this land. There is not a session of legislature, or Congress, or Cabinet, but in it are thoroughly Christian men, men whose hands would consume a bribe, whose cheek has never been flushed with intoxication, whose tongue has never been smitten of blasphemy or stung of a lie; men whose speeches in behalf of the right and against the wrong remind us of the old Scotch Covenanters, and the defiant challenge of Martin Luther, and the red lightning of Micah and Habakkuk. These times are not half as bad as the times that are gone. I judge so from the fact that Aaron Burr, a man stuffed with iniquity until he could hold no more, the debaucher of the debauched, was a member of the Legislature, then Attorney-General, then a Senator of the United States, then Vice-President, and then at last coming within one vote of the highest position in this nation. I judge it from the fact that more than half a century ago the Governor of New York disbanded the Legislature because it was too corrupt to sit in council.



AARON BURR.

There is a tendency in our time to extol the past to the disadvantage of the present, and I suppose that sixty years from now there may be persons who will represent some of us as angels, although now things are so unpromising. But the iniquity of the past is no excuse for the public wickedness of to-day, and so I unroll the scroll. Those who are in editorial chairs and in pulpits may not hold back the truth. King David must be made to feel the reproof of Nathan, and Felix must tremble before Paul, and we may not walk with muffled feet lest we wake up some big sinner. If we keep back the truth, what will we do in the day when the Lord rises up in judgment and we are tried not only for what we have said, but for what we have declined to say?

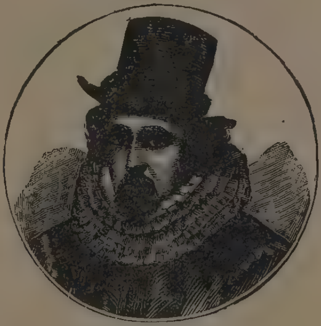
In unrolling the scroll of public wickedness, I first find incompetency for office. If a man struggle for an official position for which he has no qualification, and win that position, he commits a crime against God and against society. It is no sin for me to be ignorant of medical science; but if ignorant of medical science I set myself up among professional men and trifle with the lives of people, then the charlatanism becomes positive knavery. It is no sin for me to be ignorant of machinery; but if knowing nothing about it I attempt to take a steamer across to Southampton and through darkness and storm I hold the lives of hundreds of passengers, then all who are slain by that shipwreck may hold me accountable. But what shall I say of those who attempt to doctor our institutions without qualification and who attempt to engineer our political affairs across the rough and stormy sea, having no qualification? We had at one time in the Congress of the United States men who put one tariff upon linseed oil and another tariff upon flaxseed oil, not knowing they were the same thing. We have had men in our legislatures who knew not whether to vote aye or no until they had seen the wink of the leader. Polished civilians acquainted with all our institutions run over in a stampede for office by men who have not the first qualification. And so there have been school commissioners sometimes nominated in grog-shops and hurrahed for by the rabble, the men elected not able to read their own commissions. And judges of courts who have given sentence to criminals in such inaccuracy of phraseology that the criminal at the bar has been more amused at the stupidity of the bench than alarmed at the prospect of his own punishment. I arraign incompetency for office as one of the great crimes of this day in public places.

I unroll still further the scroll of public wickedness, and I come to intemperance. There has been a great improvement in this direction. The senators who were more celebrated for their drunkenness than for their statesmanship are dead or compelled to stay at home. I very well remember that there went from the State of New York at one time, and from the State of Delaware, and from the State of Illinois, and from other States men who were notorious everywhere as inebriates. The day is past. The grog-shop under the national Capitol to which our rulers used to go to get inspiration before they spoke upon the great moral and financial and commercial interests of the country, has been disbanded; but I am told even now under the national Capitol there are places where our rulers can get some very strong lemonade. But there has been a vast improvement. At one time I went to Washington, to the door of the House of Representatives, and sent in my card to an old friend. I had not seen him for many years, and the last time I saw him he was conspicuous for his integrity and uprightness; but that day when he came out to greet me he was staggering drunk.

The temptation to intemperance in public places is simply terrific. How often there have been men in public places who have disgraced the nation. Of the men who were prominent in political circles twenty-five or thirty years ago, how few died respectable deaths. Those who died of delirium tremens or kindred diseases were in the majority. The doctor fixed up the case very well, and in his report of it said it was gout, or it was rheumatism, or it was obstruction of the liver, or it was exhaustion from patriotic services, but God knew and we all knew it was whisky! That which smote the villain in the dark alley, smote down the great orator and the great legislator. The one you wrapped in a rough cloth, and pushed into a rough coffin, and carried out in a box wagon, and let him down into a pauper's grave without a prayer or a benediction. Around the other gathered the pomp of the land; and lordly men walked with uncovered heads beside the hearse tossing with plumes on the way to a grave to be adorned with a white marble shaft, all four sides covered with eulogium. The one man was killed by logwood rum at two cents a glass, the other by a beverage three dollars a bottle. I write both their epitaphs. I write the one epitaph with my lead-pencil on the shingle over the pauper's grave; I write the other epitaph with chisel, cutting on the white marble of the senator: "Slain by strong drink."

You know as well as I that again and again dissipation has been no hindrance to office in this country. Did we not at one time have a Secretary of the United States carried home dead drunk? Did we not have a Vice-President sworn in so intoxicated the whole land hid its head in shame? Have we not in other times had men in the Congress of the nation by day making pleas in behalf of the interests of the country, and by night illustrating what Solomon said, "He goeth after her straightway as an ox to the slaughter and as a fool to the correction of the stocks, until a dart strikes through his liver." Judges and jurors and attorneys sometimes trying important causes by day, and by night carousing together in iniquity. What was it that defeated the armies some times in the late war? Drunkenness in the saddle. What mean those graves on the heights of Fredericksburg? As you go to Richmond you see them. Drunkenness in the saddle. So again and again in the courts we have had demonstration of the fact that impurity walks under the chandeliers of the mansion and drowses on damask upholstery. Iniquity permitted to run unchallenged if it only be affluent. Stand back and let this libertine ride past in his five-thousand-dollar equipage, but clutch by the neck that poor sinner who transgresses on a small scale, and fetch him up to the police court, and give him a ride in the city van. Down with small villainy! Hurrah for grand iniquity! If you have not noticed that intemperance is one of the crimes in public places to-day, you have not been to Albany, and you have not been to Harrisburg, and you have not been to Trenton, and you have not been to Washington. The whole land cries out againt the iniquity. But the two political parties are silent lest they lose votes, and many of the newspapers are silent lest they lose subscribers, and many of the pulpits silent because there are offenders in the pews. Meanwhile God's indignation gathers like the flashings around a threatening cloud just before the swoop of a tornado. The whole land cries out to be delivered. The nation sweats great drops of blood. It is crucified, not between two thieves, but between a thousand, while nations pass by wagging their heads, and saying: "Aha! aha!"

I unroll the scroll of public iniquity, and I come to bribery—bribery by money, bribery by proffered office. Do not charge it upon American institutions. It is a sin we got from the other side the water. Francis Bacon, the thinker of his century, Francis Bacon, of whom it was said when men heard him speak they were only fearful that he would stop, Francis Bacon, with all his castles and all his emoluments, destroyed by bribery, fined two hundred thousand dollars, or what is equal to our two hundred thousand dollars, and hurled into London Tower, and his only excuse was he said all his predecessors had done the same thing. Lord Chancellor Macclesfield destroyed by bribery. Lord Chancellor Waterbury destroyed by bribery. Benedict Arnold selling the fort in the Highlands for thirty-one thousand five hundred and seventy-five dollars. For this sin Georgy betrayed Hungary, and Ahithophel forsook David, and Judas kissed Christ. And it is abroad in our land. You know in many of the legislatures of this country it has been impossible to get a bill through unless it had financial consideration. The question has been asked softly, sometimes very softly asked, in regard to a bill, "Is there any money in it?" and the lobbies of the legislatures and the National Capitol have been crowded with railroad men and manufacturers and contractors, and the iniquity has become so great that sometimes reformers and philanthropists have been laughed out of Harrisburg and Albany and Trenton and Washington because they came empty-handed. "You vote for this bill and I'll vote for that bill." "You favor that monopoly of a moneyed institution and I'll favor the other monopoly of another institution." And here is a


FRANCIS BACON.

bill that it is going to be very hard to get through the Legislature, and you will call some friends together at a midnight banquet, and while they are intoxicated you will have them promise to vote your way. Here are five thousand dollars for prudent distribution in this direction and here are one thousand dollars for prudent distribution in that direction Now, we are within four votes of having enough. You give five thousand dollars to that intelligent member from Westchester and you give two thousand dollars to that stupid member from Ulster, and now we are within two votes of having it. Give five hundred dollars to this member who will be sick and stay at home and three hundred dollars to this member who will go to see his great-aunt languishing in her last sickness. Now the day has come for the passing of the bill. The Speaker's gavel strikes. "Senators, are you ready for the question? All in favor of voting away these thousands or millions of dollars will say 'aye.'" "Aye, aye, aye, aye!" "The ayes have it."

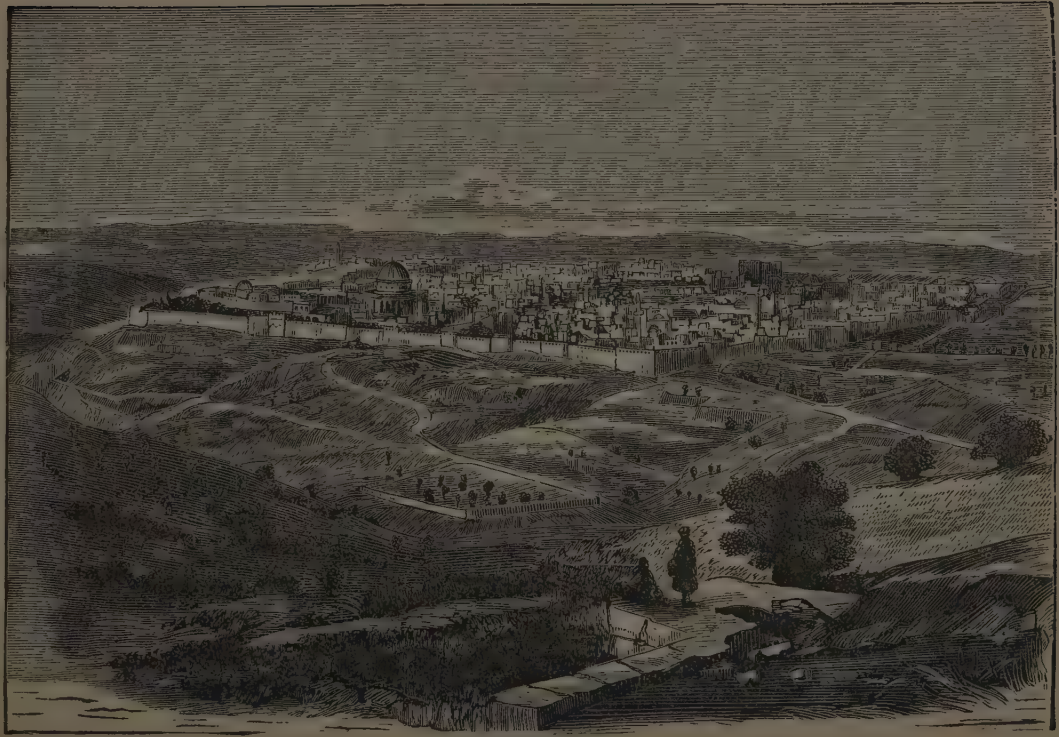
Some of the finest houses of our cities were built out of money paid for votes in the legislatures. Five hundred small wheels in political machinery with cogs reaching into one great centre wheel, and that wheel has a tire of railroad iron and a crank to it on which Satan puts his hand and turns the center wheel, and that turns the five hundred other wheels of political machinery. While in this country it is becoming harder and harder for the great mass of the people to get a living, there are too many men in this country who have their two millions and their ten millions and their twenty millions, and carry the legislators in one pocket and the Congress of the United States in the other. And there is trouble ahead. Revolution. I pray God it may be peaceful revolution and at the ballot-box. The time must come in this country when men shall be sent into public position who cannot be purchased. I do not want the union of Church and State, but I declare that if the Church of

God does not show itself in favor of the great mass of the people as well as in favor of the Lord, the time will come when the Church as an institution will be extinct, and Christ will go down again to the beach, and choose twelve plain, honest fishermen to come up into the apostleship of a new dispensation of righteousness manward and Godward.

Bribery is cursing this land. The evil started with its greatest power during the last war, when men said, "Now you give me this contract above every other applicant, and you shall have ten per cent of all I make by it. You pass these broken-down cavalry horses as good, and you shall have five thousand dollars as a bonus." "Bonus" is the word. And so they sent down to your fathers and brothers and sons, rice that was worm-eaten, and bread that was moldy, and meat that was rank, and blankets that were shoddy, and cavalry horses that stumbled in the charge, and tents that sifted the rain into exhausted faces. But it was all right. They got the bonus. I never so much believed in a Republican form of government as I do to-day, for the simple reason that any other style of government would have been consumed long ago. There have been swindles enacted in this nation within the last thirty years enough to swamp three monarchies. The Democratic party filled its cup of iniquity before it went out of power before the war. Then the Republican party came along, and its opportunities through the contracts were greater, and so it filled its cup of iniquity a little sooner, and there they lie to-day, the Democratic party and the Republican party, side by side, great loathsome carcases of iniquity, each one worse than the other. Tens of thousands of good citizens in all the parties; but you know as well as I do that party organization in this country is utterly, utterly corrupt.

Now, if there were nothing for you and for me to do in this matter I would not present this subject. There are several things for us to do. First, stand aloof from political office unless you have your moral principles thoroughly settled. Do not go into this blaze of temptation unless you are fireproof. Hundreds of respectable men have been destroyed for this life and the life to come because they had not moral principle to stand office. You go into some office of authority without moral principle, and before you get through you will lie, and you will swear, and you will gamble, and you will steal. Another thing for you to do is to be faithful at the ballot-box. Do not stand on your dignity and say, "I'll not go where the rabble are." If need be, put on your old clothes and just push yourself through amid the unwashed, and vote. Vote for men who love God and hate rum. You cannot say, you ought not to say, "I have nothing to do with this matter." Then you will insult the graves of your fathers who died for the establishment of the government and you will insult the graves of your children who may live to feel the results of your negligence. Evangelize the people. Get the hearts of the people right, and they will vote right. That woman who this afternoon in Sunday-school teaches six boys how to be Christians will do more for the future of this country than the man who writes the finest essay about the Federal Constitution. I know there are a great many good people who think that God ought to be recognized in the Constitution, and they are making a move in that direction. I am most anxious that God shall be in the hearts of the people. Get their hearts right, and then they will vote right.

If there be fifty million people in this country, then at least a fifty millionth part of the responsibility rests on you. What we want is a great revival of religion reaching from sea to sea, and it is going to come. A newspaper gentleman asked me a few weeks ago what I thought of revivals. I said I thought so much of them I never put my faith in anything else. We want thousands in a day, hundreds of thousands in a day, nations in a day. Get all the people evangelized, brought under Christianized influences. These great evils that we now so much deplore will be banished from the land. And remember that we are at last to be judged, not as nations, but as individuals—in that day when empires and republics shall alike go down and we shall have to give account for ourselves, for what we have done and for what we have neglected to do—in that day when the earth itself will be a heap of ashes scattered in the blast of the nostrils of the Lord God Almighty. God save the United States of America!



JERUSALEM.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MUNICIPAL SINS.

The citizens of Old Jerusalem are in the tip-top of excitement. A countryman has been doing some wonderful works and asserting very high authority. The police court has issued papers for His arrest, for this thing must be stopped as the very Government is imperilled. News comes that last night this stranger arrived at a suburban village, and that He is stopping at the house of a man whom he had resuscitated after four days' sepulture. The people rush out into the streets, some with the idea of helping in the arrest of this stranger when he arrives, and others expecting that on the morrow He will come into the town, and by some supernatural force oust the municipal and royal authorities and take everything in His own hands. They pour out of the city gates until the procession reaches to the village. They come all around about the house where the stranger is stopping, and peer into the doors and windows that they may get one glimpse of Him or hear the hum of His voice. The police dare not make the arrest because He has, somehow, won the affections of all the people. It is a lively night in Bethany. The heretofore quiet village is filled with uproar and outcry and loud discussion about the strange acting countryman. I do not think there was any sleep in that house that night where the stranger was stopping. Although He came in weary He finds no rest, though for once in His lifetime He had a pillow. But the morning dawns, the olive gardens wave in the light, and all along the road, reaching over the top of Olivet toward Jerusalem, there is a vast swaying crowd of wondering people. The excitement around the door of the cottage is wild as the stranger steps out beside an unbroken colt that had never been mounted, and after His friends had strewn their garments on the beast for a saddle, the Saviour mounts it, and the populace, excited and shouting and feverish, push on back toward Jerusalem. Let none jeer now or scoff at this rider or the populace will trample him under foot in an instant. There is one long shout of two miles, and as far as eye can reach you see wavings of demonstration and approval.

There is something in the rider's visage, something in His majestic brow, something in His princely behavior, that stirs up the enthusiasm of the people. They run up against the beast and try to pull off into their arms and carry on their shoulders the illustrious stranger. The populace are so excited that they hardly know what to do with themselves, and some rush up to the roadside trees and wrench off branches and throw them in His way; and others doff their garments, what though they be new and costly, and spread them for a carpet for the conqueror to ride over. "Hosanna!" cry the people at the foot of the hill. "Hosanna!" cry the people all up and down the mountain. The procession has now come to the brow of Olivet. Magnificent prospect reaching out in every direction—vineyards, olive groves, jutting rock, silvery Siloam, and, above all, rising on its throne of hills, the most highly honored city of all the earth, Jerusalem. Christ there, in the midst of the procession, looks off and sees here the fortressed gates, and yonder the circling wall, and here the towers blazing in the sun, Phasælus and Mariamne. Yonder is Hippicus, the king's castle. Looking along in the range of the larger branch of that olive tree you see the mansions of the merchant princes. Through this cleft in the limestone rock you see the palace of the richest trafficker in all the earth. He has made his money by selling Tyrian purple. Behold now the Temple! Clouds of smoke lifting from the shimmering roof, while the building rises up beautiful, grand, majestic, the architectural skill and glory of the earth lifting themselves there in one triumphant doxology, the frozen prayer of all nations.

The crowd looked around to see exhilaration and transport in the face of Christ. Oh, no! Out from amid the gates and the domes and the palaces there arose a vision of that city's sin and of that city's doom which obliterated the landscape from horizon to horizon, and He burst into tears. "He beheld the city, and wept over it."

Standing in some high towers of our cities, we might look off upon a wondrous scene of enterprise and wealth and beauty; long streets faced by comfortable homes, here and there rising into affluence, while we might find thousands of people who would be glad to cast palm branches in the way of Him who comes from Bethany to Jerusalem, greeting Him with the vociferation, "Hosanna! to the Son of David." And yet how much there is to mourn over in our cities. Passing along the streets Sunday are a great multitude. Whither do they go? To church. Thank God for that. Listen, and you hear multitudinous voices of praise. Thank God for that. When the evening falls you will find Christian men and women knocking at hovels of poverty and finding no light; taking the matches from their pocket, and by a momentary glance revealing wan faces and wasted hands and ragged bed; sending in, before morning, candles and vials of medicine, and Bibles and loaves of bread, and two or three flowers from the hot-house. Thank God for all that. But listen again, and you hear the thousand-voiced shriek of blasphemy tearing its way up from the depths of the city. You see the uplifted decanters emptied now, but uplifted to fight down the devils they have raised. Listen to that wild laugh at the street corner, that makes the pure shudder and say, "Poor thing, that's a lost soul!" Hark! to the click of the gambler's dice and the hysteric guffaw of him who has pocketed the last dollar of that young man's estate. This is the banquet of Bacchus. That young man has taken his first glass. That man has taken down three-fourths of his estate. This man is trembling with last night's debauch. This man has pawned everything save that old coat. This man is in delirium, sitting pale and unaware of anything that is transpiring about him—quiet, until after a while he rises up with a shriek, enough to make the denizens of the pit clap to the door, and put their fingers in their ears, and rattle their chains still louder to drown out the horrible outcry. You say, "Is it not strange that there should be so much suffering and sin in our cities?" No, it is not strange. When I look abroad and see the temptations that are attempting to destroy men for time and for eternity, I am surprised in the other direction that there are any true, upright, honest, Christian people left. There is but little hope for any man in these great cities who has not established in his soul sound, thorough Christian principle.

Look around you and see the temptations to commercial frauds. Here is a man who starts in business. He says, "I am going to be honest;" but on the same street, on the same block, in the same business, are Shylocks. Those men, to get the patronage of any one, will break all understandings with other merchants, and will sell at ruinous cost, putting their neighbors at great disadvantage, expecting to make up the deficit on something else. If an honest principle could creep into that man's soul, it would die of sheer loneliness! The man twists about, trying to escape the penalty of the law, and despises God, while he is just a little anxious about the sheriff. The honest man looks about him and says, "Well, this rivalry is awful. Perhaps I am more scrupulous than I need be. This little bargain I am about to enter is a little doubtful; but then they all do it." I had a friend who started in commercial life, and as a book merchant, with a high resolve. He said, "In my store there shall be no books that I would not have my family read." Time passed on, and one day I went into his store and found some iniquitous books on the shelf, and I said to him, "How is it possible that you can consent to sell such books as these?" "Oh," he replied, "I have got over those Puritanical notions. A man cannot do business in this day unless he does it the way other people do it." To make a long story short, he lost his hope of heaven, and in a little while he lost his morality, and then he went into a mad-house. In other words, when a man casts off God, God casts him off.

One of the mightiest temptations in commercial life in all our cities, to-day, is in the fact that many professed Christian men are not square in their bargains. Such men are in Baptist and Methodist and Congregational and Presbyterian Churches. Our good merchants are foremost in Christian enterprises; they are patronizers of art, philanthropic and patriotic. God will attend to them in the day of His coronation. I am not speaking of them, but of those in commercial life who are setting a ruinous example to young merchants. Go through all the stores and through all the offices, and tell me in how many of those stores and offices are the principles of Christ's religion dominant? In three-fourths of them? No. In half of them? No. In one-tenth of them? Decide for yourself.

The impression is abroad, somehow, that charity can consecrate iniquitous gains, and that if a man give to God a portion of an unrighteous bargain, then the Lord will forgive him for the rest. The secretary of a benevolent society came to me and said, "Mr. So and So has given a large amount of money to the missionary cause," mentioning the sum. I said, "I can't believe it." He said, "It is so." I went home, staggered and confounded. I never knew the man to give to anything; but after awhile I found out that he had been engaged in the most infamous kind of an oil swindle, and then he proposed to compromise the matter with the Lord, saying, "Now here is so much for Thee, Lord. Please to let me off!" I want to tell you that the Church of God is not a shop for receiving stolen goods, and that if you have taken anything from your fellows, you had better return it to the men to whom it belongs. If from the nature of the circumstances that be impossible, you had better get your stove red-hot, and when the flames are at their fiercest toss in the blasted spoil. God does not want it.

The commercial world to-day is rotten through and through, and many of you know better than I can tell you that it requires great strength of moral character to withstand the temptations to business dishonesties. Thank God, a great many of you have withstood the temptations, and are as pure and upright and honest as the day when you entered business. But you are the exceptions in the case. God will sustain a man, however, amid all the excitements of business, if he will only put his trust in Him. In a drug-store, in Philadelphia, a young man was told he must sell blackening on the Lord's day. He said to the head man of the firm, I can't possibly do that. I am willing to sell medicines on the Lord's day, for I think that is right and necessary; but I can't sell this patent blackening. He was discharged from the place. A Christian man hearing of it, took him into his employ, and he went on from one success to another, until he was known all over the land for his faith in God and his good works, as well as for his worldly success. When a man has sacrificed any temporal financial good for the sake of his spiritual interests, the Lord is on his side, and one with God is a majority.

Look around you and see the pressure of political life. How many are going down under this influence. There is not one man out of a thousand that can stand political life in our cities. Once in a while a man comes and says, "Now I love my city and my country, and, in the strength of God, I am going in as a sort of missionary to reform politics." The

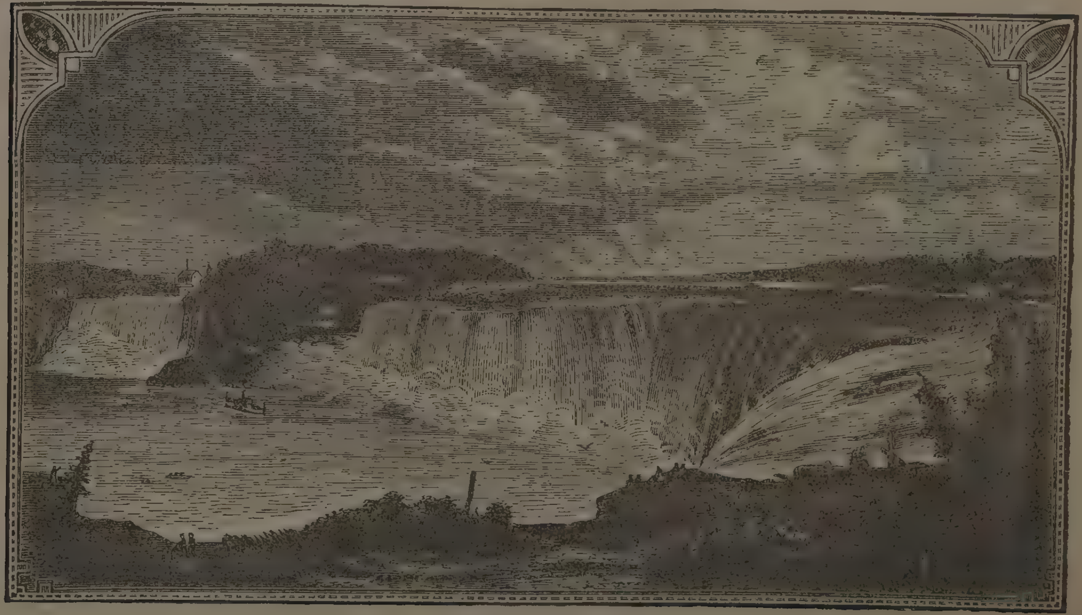
Lord is on his side. He comes out as pure as when he went in, and, with such an idea, I believe he will be sustained; but he is the exception. When such an upright, pure man does step into politics, the first thing, the newspapers take the job of blackening him all over, and they review all his past life, and distort everything that he has done, until, from thinking himself a highly respectable citizen, he begins to contemplate what a mercy it is that he has been so long out of prison. What a bewitching thing is political life for many of our young men. They go in at the grog-shop caucus. They come out at the ballot-box. To get nominations they must sidle up along the rum-soaked population. They must "treat;" they must go into the low saloon which is marked by a mug of beer on the sign; they must cross palms with the lecherous wretches; they must chuckle over their low jokes; yea, they must go down to the level of their constituency. What is the matter of that man who once moved in polite circles, and often in Christian circles? What is the matter of his coat? It is lacking in neatness. What is the matter of his eye? It is not so clear. What is the matter of his cheek? It has an unnatural flush. What is the matter of his hat? It is a rowdy's hat. Why has his entire nature gone down seventy-five per cent in moral tone? He has gone into politics. The most hopeless, God-forsaken people in all our cities are those who, not in a missionary spirit, but with the idea of sordid gain, have gone into political life. I pray for the prisoners in jail, and think they may be converted to God, but I never have any faith to pray for an old politician. I suppose God could convert him, but I do not know of any case. For the last twenty-five years, in our great cities, the political history has been a history of fraud, of chicanery, of gouging and of swindling, until New York had a debt of one hundred and twenty million dollars. Park swindles. Water Board swindles. Street swindles. Boulevard swindles. Penitentiary swindles. City armory swindles. Swindles of black and white. Swindles of all sizes. What an appalling state of political life the simple fact that John Morrissey could be a senator! Ever and anon we get up a class of reformers and we send them into political life, and, before we know it, some of them are in the race of dishonesty, until we are in a state of bewilderment, and do not know who are the worst—the men *in* the "ring," or those who are *out* of the "ring." New York Post-office costing more than the Parliament Houses of England; more, I am told, than the "Capitol" at Washington. But where went the money? Ask the Connollys and the Sweeneys and the Tweeds of modern politics.

Our young men say that political life is a quick road to fortune. They say, "I know men who five years ago were worth nothing, who now have everything." Of the one hundred who go into political life, I bid an eternal farewell to ninety-nine of them. Their morals will be debauched. Their families will be disgraced. Their souls will be damned. For a little while they will lounge around the Court House in the winter, and in the summer flash in and out at the Saratoga races, and then there will be a big funeral, with a long line of carriages full of bloats. That will be the earthly end of the politician. Starting in a grog-shop caucus: ending at the burying ground. The family doctor certifying to the Board of Health that the Honorable Mr. So and So died of congestion—a soft way of putting *delirium tremens.*

Then look around and see the allurements to an impure life. Bad books, unknown to father and mother, vile as the lice of Egypt, creeping into some of the best families; and boys read them while the teacher is looking the other way, or at recess, or on the corner of the street, when the groups are gathered. These books are read late at night. Satan finds them a smooth plank on which he can slide down into perdition some of your sons and daughters. Reading bad books—one never gets over it. The books may be burned, but there is not enough powder in all the apothecary's preparations to wash out the stain from the soul. Father's hands, mother's hands, sister's hands will not wash it out. None but the hand of the Lord God can wash it out. And what is more perilous in regard to these temptations, we may not mention them. While God in the Bible, from chapter to chapter, thunders His denunciation against these crimes, people expect the pulpit and the printing-press to be silent on the subject, and just in proportion as people are impure are they fastidious on the theme. They are so full of decay and death they do not want their sepulchers opened. But I shall not be hindered by them. I shall go on in the name of the Lord Almighty, before whom you and I must at last come in judgment, and I shall pursue that vile sin, and thrust it with the two-edged sword of God's truth, though I find it sheltered under the chandeliers of some of your beautiful parlors. God will turn into destruction all the unclean, and no splendors of surrounding can make decent that which He has smitten. God will not excuse sin merely because it has costly array and beautiful tapestry and palatial residence any more than He will excuse that which crawls, a blotch of sores, through the lowest cellar in Elm street. Ever and anon, through some law-suit, there flashes upon the people of our great cities what is transpiring in seemingly respectable circles. You call it "High life," you call it "Fast living," you call it "People's eccentricity." And while we kick off the sidewalk the poor wretch who has not the means to garnish his iniquity, these lords and ladies, wrapped in purple and fine linen, go unwhipped of public justice. You call it "High life," "Fast living," "Eccentricity." I call it the vomit of hell! Ah, the most dreadful part of the whole thing is that there are persons abroad whose whole business it is to despoil the young. Salaried by infamous establishments, these cormorants of darkness, these incarnate fiends hang around your hotels and your engine houses and your theaters, and they insinuate themselves among the clerks of your stores, and by adroitest art, sometimes get in the purest circles. Oh, what an eternity such a man as that will have! As the door opens to receive him, thousands of voices will cry out: "See here what you have done;" and the wretch will wrap himself with fiercer flame and leap into deeper darkness, and the multitudes he has destroyed will pursue him, and hurl at him the long, bitter, relentless, everlasting curse of their own anguish. If there be one cup of eternal darkness more bitter than another, they will have to drink it to the dregs. If, in all the ocean of the lost world that comes billowing up, there be one wave more fierce than another, it will dash over them. "God will wound the hairy scalp of him who goeth on still in his trespasses."

I think you are persuaded there is but little chance in our great cities for any young man without the grace of God. I will even go further and make it more emphatic and say there is no chance for any young man who has not above him, and beneath him, and before him, and behind him, and on the right of him, and on the left of him, and within him the all-protecting grace of God. My word of warning is to those who have recently come to the city; some of them entering banking institutions, and some of them stores and shops. Shelter yourselves in God. Do not trust yourselves an hour without the defenses of Christ's religion.

I stood one day at Niagara Falls, and I saw what you may have seen there, six rainbows bending over that tremendous plunge. I never saw anything like it before or since. Six beautiful rainbows arching that great cataract! And so over the rapids and the angry precipices of sin, where so many have been dashed down, God's beautiful admonitions hover, a warning arching each peril—six of them, fifty of them — a thousand of them. Beware! beware! beware!



NIAGARA FALLS.

Young men, while you have time reflect upon these things, and before the duties of the office and the store and the shop come upon you, look over this whole subject, and after the day has passed, and you hear in the nightfall the voices and the footsteps of the city dying from your ear, and it gets so silent that you can hear distinctly your watch under your pillow going "tick, tick!" then open your eyes and look out upon the darkness and see two pillars of light, one horizontal, the other perpendicular, but changing their direction until they come together, and your enraptured vision beholds it—THE CROSS!

CHAPTER XXXII.

CURE OF FINANCES.

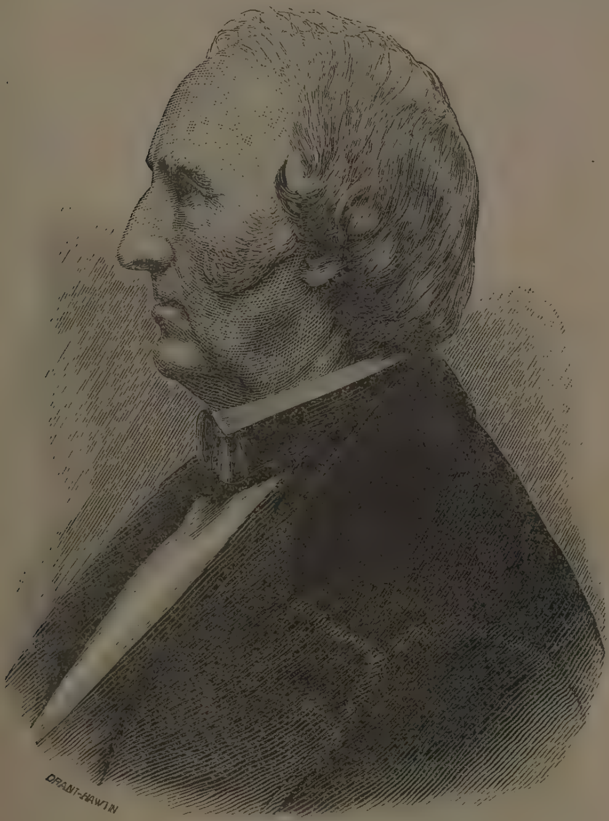
Our blessings are so much more numerous than our deserts that the writer is surprised that anybody should ever find fault. Having life, and with it a thousand blessings, it ought to hush into perpetual silence everything like criticism of the dealings of God. "Wherefore doth a *living* man complain?"

For the last few years the land has been set to the tune of "Naomi." There has been here and there a cheerful soloist, but the grand chorus has been one of lamentation, accompanied by dirges over prostrated commerce, silent manufactories, unemployed mechanism, and all those disorders described by the two short words "hard times." The fact is that we have been paying for the bloody luxury of war. There were great national differences, and we had not enough Christian character to settle them by arbitration and treaty, and so we went into battle, wasting life and treasure, and well nigh swamping the national finances; and North and South, East and West have ever since been paying for these four years' indulgence in barbarism. But the time has come when this depression ought to end,— yea, when it will end, if the people are willing to do two or three things by way of financial medicament. The best political economists tell us that there is no good reason for continued prostration. Plenty of money awaiting investment. Magnificent harvests crowding down from the West to the seaboard. The national health with never so strong an arm or so clear a brain. Yet we go on groaning, groaning, groaning, as though God had put this nation upon gruel, and allowed us but one decent breakfast in six months. The fact is the habit of complaining has become chronic in this country, and after all these years of whimper and wailing and objurgation, we are under such a momentum of snivel that we cannot stop.

There are three prescriptions by which I believe that our individual and national finances may be cured of their present depression. The first is *cheerful conversation and behavior*. I have noticed that the people who are most vociferous against the day in which we live are those who are in comfortable circumstances. I have made inquiry of those persons who are violent in their jeremiades against these times, and I have asked them: " Now, after all, are you not making a living? " And after some hesitation and coughing and clearing their throat three or four times, they say, stammeringly: " Y-e-s." So that with a great multitude of people it is not a question of getting a livelihood, but they are dissatisfied because they cannot make as much money as they would like to make. They have only two thousand dollars in the bank, where they would like to have four thousand. They can clear in a year only five thousand dollars, when they would like to clear ten thousand, or things come out just even. Or in their trade they get two dollars a day when they wish they could get three or four. "Oh! " says some one, " are you not aware of the fact that there is a great population out of employment, and that there are hundreds of the good families of this country who are at their wits' ends, not knowing which way to turn? " Yes, I know it better than any man in private life can know that sad fact, for it comes constantly to my eye and ear. But who is responsible for this state of things?

Much of that responsibility I put upon men in comfortable circumstances, who, by an everlasting growling, keep public confidence depressed and new enterprises from starting out and new houses from being built. You know very well that one despondent man can talk fifty men into despondency, while one cheerful physician can wake up into exhilaration a whole asylum of hypochondriacs. It is no kindness to the poor or the unemployed for you to join in this deploration. If you have not the wit and the common sense to think of something cheerful to say, then keep silent. There is no man that can be independent of depressed conversation. The medical journals are ever illustrating it. I was reading of five men who resolved that they would make an experiment and see what they could do in the way of depressing a stout, healthy man, and they resolved to meet him at different points in his journey; and as he stepped out from his house in the morning in robust health, one of the five men met him and said: "Why, you look very sick to-day. What is the matter?" "He said: "I am in excellent health; there is nothing the matter." But passing down the street, he began to examine his symptoms, and the second of the five men met him and said: "Why, how bad you do look." "Well," he replied, "I don't feel very well!" After a while, the third man met him, and the fourth man met him, and the fifth came up and said, "Why, you look as if you had had the typhoid fever for six weeks. What is the matter with you?" And the man against whom the stratagem had been laid went home and died. And if you meet a man with perpetual talk about hard times and bankruptcy and dreadful winters that are to come, you break down his courage. A few autumns ago, as the winter was coming on, people said: "We shall have a terrible winter. The poor will be frozen out this winter." There was something in the large store of acorns that the squirrels had gathered, and something in the phases of the moon, and something in other portents, that made you certain we were going to have a hard winter. Winter came. It was the mildest one within my memory and within yours. All that winter long I do not think there was an icicle that hung through the day from the eaves of the house. So you prophesied falsely. Last winter was coming, and the people said: "We shall have unparalleled suffering among the poor. It will be a dreadful winter." Sure enough it was a cold winter; but there were more large-hearted charities than ever before poured out on the country; better provision made for the poor, so that there have been scores of winters when the poor had a harder time than they did last winter. Another winter is coming on, and I hear the evil prophecy already rising on the air. I hear it everywhere. Now, let me tell you, you lied twice about winter, and I believe you are lying this time! I will give my prophecy on this coming winter. That is, it will be the easiest winter we ever had, either in one way or the other. If it be severe in temperature, then I believe there will be such Christian beneficence that the poor will not suffer more than they ever have before.

Wendell Phillips was so overborne with the dolorousness of the times, that he said if we do not inflate, we shall have communistic outrages in this country such as they had in France. I do not believe it. The parallel does not run. They have no Sabbath, no Bible, no God, in France. We have all these defenses for our American people, and public opinion is such that if people in this country attempt a cut-throat expedition, they will land in Sing Sing, or from the gallows go up on tight rope. I do not believe the people of this country will ever commit outrages and riot and murder for the sake of getting bread. But all this lugubrosity of tone and face keeps people down. Now I will make a contract. If the people of the United States for one week will talk cheerfully, I will open all the manufactories; I will give employment to all the unoccupied men and women; I will make a lively market for your real estate that is eating you up with taxes; I will stop the long processions on the way to the poor-house and the penitentiary, and I will spread a plentiful table from Maine to California and from Oregon to Sandy Hook, and the whole land shall carol and thunder with national jubilee. But says some one: "I will take that contract; but we can't affect the whole nation." My readers, representing as you do all professions, all trades,



WENDELL PHILLIPS.

and all occupations, if you should resolve never again to utter a dolorous word about the money markets, but by manner and by voice and by wit and caricature, and above all by faith in God, to try to scatter this national gloom, do you not believe the influence would be instantaneous and wide-spread? The effect would be felt around the world. For God's sake, and for the sake of the poor and for the sake of the unemployed, quit growling. Depend upon it, if you men in comfortable circumstances do not stop complaining, God will blast your harvests, and see how you will get along without a corn crop; and He will sweep you with floods as he did Galveston; and He will devour you with grasshoppers as He did Minnesota; and He will burn your city as He did Chicago. If you men in comfortable circumstances keep on complaining, God will give you something to complain about. Mark that!

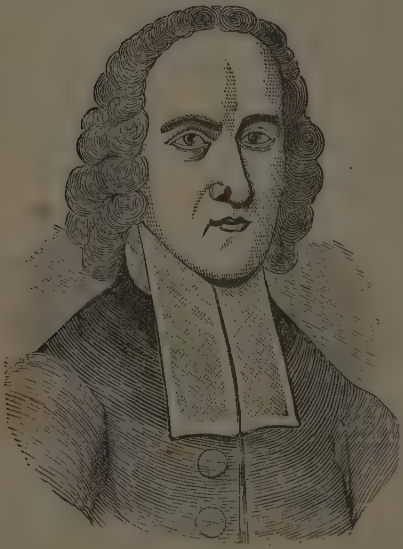
The second prescription for the alleviation of financial distresses is *proper Christian investment.* God demands of every individual State, and nation a certain proportion of their income. We are parsimonious! We keep back from God that which belongs to Him, and when we keep back anything from God, He takes what we keep back, and He takes more. He takes it by storm, by sickness, by bankruptcy, by any one of the ten thousand ways which he can employ. The reason many of you are cramped in business is because you have never learned the lesson of Christian generosity. You employ an agent. You give him a reasonable salary; and, lo! you find out that he is appropriating your funds besides the salary. What do you do? Discharge him. Well, we are God's agents. He puts in our hands certain moneys. Part are to be ours; part are to be His. Suppose we take all, what then? He will discharge us; He will turn us over to financial disasters, and take the trust away from us. The reason that great multitudes are not prospered in business is simply because they have been withholding from God that which belongs to Him. The rule is, give and you will receive; administer liberally and you shall have more to administer. I am in full sympathy with the man who was to be baptized by immersion, and some one said: "You had better leave your pocket-book out; it will get wet." "No," said he, "I want to go down under the wave with everything. I want to consecrate my property and all to God." And so he was baptized. What we want in this country is more baptized pocket-books.

I had a relative whose business seemed to be failing. Here a loss, and there a loss, and everything was bothering, perplexing, and annoying him. He sat down one day, and said· "God must have a controversy with me about something. I believe I haven't given enough to the cause of Christ." And there and then he took out his check-book and wrote a large check for a missionary society. He told me: "That was the turning-point in my business. Ever since then I have been prosperous. From that very day, aye, from that very hour, I saw the change." And, sure enough, he went on, and he gathered a fortune. The only safe investment that a man can make in this world is in the cause of Christ. I have tried it personally on a small scale. When I have been mean and stingy toward the cause of Christ, I have been perplexed in financial things. When I have been comparatively liberal, it has come right back upon me. I never yet gave God one dollar but He returned five. If a man give from a superabundance, God may or He may not respond with a blessing; but if a man give until he feels it, if a man give until it fetches the blood, if a man give until his selfishness cringes and twists and cowers under it, he will get not only spiritual profit, but he will get paid back in hard cash or in convertible securities. We often see men who are tight-fisted who seem to get along with their investments very profitably, notwithstanding all their parsimony. But wait. Suddenly in that man's history everything goes wrong. His health fails, or his reason is dethroned, or a domestic curse smites him, or a midnight shadow of some kind drops upon his soul and upon his business. What is the matter? God is punishing him for his small-heartedness. He tried to cheat God, and God worsted him. So that one of the recipes for the cure of individual and national finances is more generosity. Where you bestowed one dollar on the cause of Christ, give two. God loves to be trusted, and He is very apt to trust back again. He says: "That man knows how to handle money; he shall have more money to handle;" and very soon the property that was on the market for a great while gets a purchaser, and the bond that was not worth more than fifty cents on a dollar goes to par, and the opening of a new street doubles the value of his house, or in any way of a million God blesses him.

Once the man finds out that secret, and he goes on to fortune. There are men whom I have known who for ten years have been trying to pay God one thousand dollars. They have never been able to get it paid, for just as they were taking out from one fold of their pocket-book a bill, mysteriously somehow in some other fold of their pocket-book there came a larger bill. You tell me that Christian generosity pays in the world to come. I tell you it pays now, pays in hard cash, pays in government securities. You do not believe it? Ah, that is what keeps you back. I knew you did not believe it. The whole world and Christendom is to be reconstructed on this subject, and as you are a part of Christendom, let the work begin in your own soul. "But," says some one, "I don't believe that theory; because I have been generous and I have been losing money for ten years." Then God prepaid you, that is all. What became of the money that you made in other days? You say to your son: "Now I will give you five hundred dollars every year as long as you live." After a while you say: "Well, my son, you prove yourself so worthy of my confidence I will just give you twenty thousand dollars in a single lump." And you give it to him and he starts off. In two or three years he does not complain against you: "Father is not taking care of me. I ought to have five hundred dollars a year." You prepaid your son, and he does not complain. There are thousands of us now who can this year get just enough to supply our wants; but did not God provide for us in the past, and has He not again and again and again paid us in advance? In other words, trusted you all along—trusted you more than you had a right to ask? Strike, then, a balance for God. Economize in anything rather than in your Christian charities. There is not more than one out of three hundred of you who ever give enough to do you any good, and when some cause of Christianity—some missionary society or Bible society or Church organization comes along and gets anything from you, what do you say? You say, "I have been bled," and there never was a more significant figure of speech than that used in common parlance. Yes, you have been bled, and you are spiritually emaciated, when if you had been courageous enough to go through your property and say: "That belongs to God, and this belongs to God, and the other thing belongs to God;" and no more dared to appropriate it to your own use than something that belonged to your neighbor, instead of being bled to death by charities you would have been reinvigorated and recuperated and built up for time and for eternity. God will keep many of you cramped in money matters until the day of your death unless you swing out into larger generosities.

People quote as a joke what is a divine promise: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it will return to thee after many days." What did God mean by that? There is an allusion there. In Egypt, when they sow the corn, it is at a time when the Nile is overflowing its banks and they sow the seed corn on the waters, and as the Nile begins to recede this seed corn strikes in the earth and comes up a harvest, and that is the allusion. It seems as if they are throwing the corn away on the waters, but after a while they gather it up in a harvest. Now says God in his word: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall come back to thee after many days." It may seem to you that you are throwing it away on charities, but it will yield a harvest of green and gold—a harvest on earth and a harvest in heaven. If men could appreciate that and act on that, we would have no more trouble about individual or national finances.

Prescription the third, for the cure of all our individual and national financial distresses: *a great spiritual awakening.* It is no mere theory. The merchantmen of this country were positively demented with the monetary excitement in 1857. There never before nor since has been such a state of financial depression as there was at that time. A revival came, and three hundred thousand people were born into the kingdom of God. What came after the revival? The grandest financial prosperity we have ever had in this country. The finest fortunes, the largest fortunes in the United States, have been made since 1857. "Well," you say, "what has spiritual improvement and revival to do with monetary improvement and revival?" Much to do. The religion of Jesus Christ has a direct tendency to make men honest and sober and truth-telling, and are not honesty and sobriety and truth-telling



JONATHAN EDWARDS.

auxiliaries of material prosperity? If we could have an awakening in this country as in the days of Jonathan Edwards, of Northampton, as in the days of Dr. Finley of Basking Ridge, as in the days of Dr. Griffin, of Boston, the whole land would rouse to a higher moral tone, and with that moral tone the honest business enterprise of the country would come up. You say a great awakening has an influence upon the future world. I tell you it has a direct influence upon the financial welfare of this world. The religion of Christ is no foe to successful business; it is its best friend. And if there should come a great awakening in this country, and all the banks and insurance companies and stores and offices and shops should close up for two weeks, and do nothing but attend to the public worship of Almighty God—after such a spiritual vacation the land would wake up to such financial prosperity as we have never dreamed of. Godliness is profitable for the life that now is as well as for that which is to come. But my readers, do not put so much emphasis on worldly success as to let your eternal affairs go at loose ends. I have nothing to say against money. The more money you get the better, if it comes honestly and goes usefully. For the lack of it, sickness dies without medicine, and hunger finds its coffin in an empty bread-tray, and nakedness shivers for clothes and fire. All this canting tirade against money as though it had no practical use. When I hear a man indulge in it, it makes me think that the best heaven for him would be an everlasting poor-house! No, there is a practical use in money; but while we admit that, we must also admit that it cannot satisfy the soul, that it cannot pay for our ferriage across the Jordan of death, that it cannot unlock the gate of heaven for our immortal soul. Yet there are men who act as though packs of bonds and mortgages could be traded off for a mansion in heaven, and as though gold were a legal tender in that land where it is so common that they make pavements out of it.

Salvation by Christ is the only salvation. Treasures in heaven are the only incorruptible treasures. Have you ever ciphered out that sum in loss and gain, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" You may wear fine apparel now, but the winds of death will flutter it like rags. Homespun and a threadbare coat have sometimes been the shadow of robes white in the blood of the Lamb. All the mines of Australia and Brazil, strung in one carcanet, are not worth to you as much as the pearl of great price. You remember, I suppose, some years ago, the shipwreck of the *Central America?* A storm came on that vessel. The surges tramped the deck and swept down through the hatches, and there went up a hundred-voiced death shriek. The foam on the jaw of the wave. The pitching of the steamer, as though it would leap a mountain. The glare of the signal rockets. The long cough of the steam-pipes. The hiss of extinguished furnaces. The walking of God on the wave. O, it was a stupendous spectacle. But that ship did not go down without a struggle. The passengers stood in long lines trying to bail it out, and men unused to toil tugged until their hands were blistered and their muscles were strained. After a while a sail came in sight. A few passengers got off, but the most went down. The ship gave one lurch and was lost.

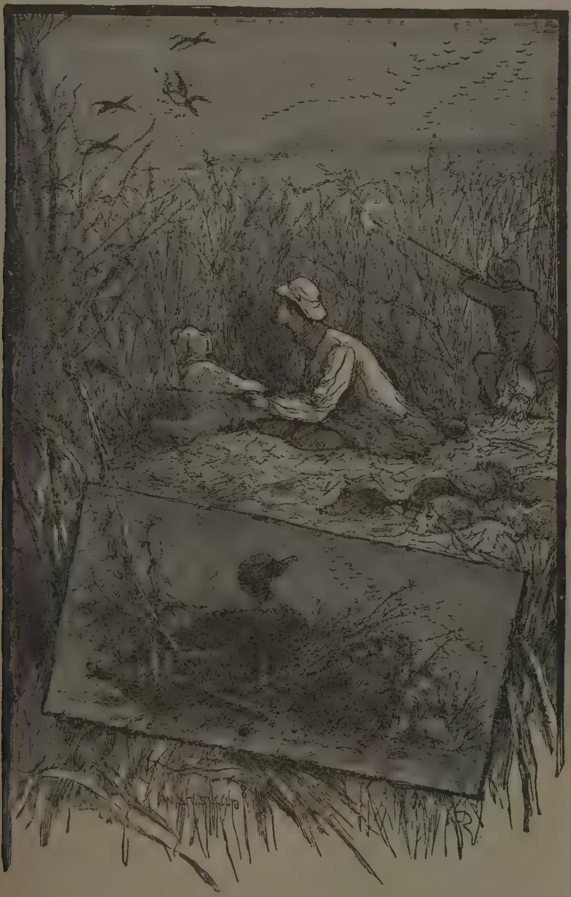
So, there are men who go on in life—a fine voyage they are making out of it. All is well, till some euroclydon of business disaster comes upon them, and they go down. The bottom of this commercial sea is strewn with the shattered hulks. But, because your property goes, shall your soul go? O, no! There is coming a more stupendous shipwreck after a while. This world—God launched it six thousand years ago, and it is sailing on; but one day it will stagger at the cry of "fire!" and the timbers of the rocks will burn, and the mountains flame like masts, and the clouds like sails in the judgment hurricane. God will take a good many off the deck, and others out of the berths, where they are now sleeping in Jesus. How many shall go down? No one will know until it is announced in heaven one day: "Shipwreck of a world! So many millions saved! So many millions drowned!" Because your fortunes go, because your house goes, because all your earthly possessions go, do not let your soul go! May the Lord Almighty, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, save your souls.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SPOILS.

"He shall devour the prey and at night he shall divide the spoils." There is in this story such an affluence of simile and allegory, such a mingling of metaphors, that there are a thousand thoughts in it not on the surface. Old Jacob, dying, is telling the fortunes of his children. He prophesies the devouring propensities of Benjamin and his descendants. With his dim old eyes he looks off and sees the hunters going out to the fields, ranging them all day, and at nightfall coming home, the game slung over the shoulder, and reaching the door of the tent, the hunters begin to distribute the game, and one takes a coney, and another a rabbit, and another a roe. Or it may be a reference to the habits of wild beasts that slay their prey, and then drag it back to the cave or lair, and divide it among the young.

There is nothing more fascinating than the life of a hunter. On a certain day in all England you can hear the crack of the sportsman's gun, because grouse hunting has begun; and every man that can afford the time and ammunition, and can draw a bead, starts for the fields. On the 20th of October our woods and forests resound with the shock of firearms, and are tracked of pointers and setters, because the quail is then a lawful prize for the sportsman. Xenophon grew eloquent in regard to the art of hunting. In the far East people, elephant-mounted, chase the tiger. The American Indian darts his arrow at the buffalo until the frightened herd tumble over the rocks. European nobles are often found in the fox chase and at the stag hunt. Francis I. was called the father of hunting. Moses declares of Nimrod: He was a mighty hunter before the Lord." Therefore, in all ages of

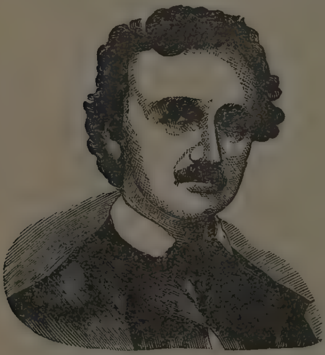


A HUNTING SCENE IN MINNESOTA.

the world, the imagery of this story ought to be suggestive, whether it means a wolf after a fox, or a man after a lion.

"In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoils." This, in the first place, is descriptive of those people who, in the morning of their life, give themselves up to hunting the world, but afterward, by the grace of God, in the evening of their life divide among themselves the spoils of Christian character.

There are aged Christian men and women who would tell you that in the morning of their life they were after the world as intense as a hound after a hare, or as a falcon swoops upon a gazelle. They wanted the world's plaudits and the world's gains. They felt that if they could get this world they would have everything. Some of them started out for the pleasures of the world. They thought that the man who laughed loudest was happiest. They tried repartee and conundrum and burlesque and madrigal. They thought they would like to be Tom Hoods, or Charles Lambs, or Edgar A. Poes. They mingled wine and music and the spectacular. They were worshippers of the harlequin, and the merry Andrew, and the buffoon, and the jester. Life was to them foam and bubble and cachination and roystering and grimace. They were so full of glee they could hardly repress their mirth even on solemn occasions, and they came near bursting out hilariously even at the burial, because there was something so dolorous in the tone or countenance of the undertaker. After a while misfortune struck them hard on the back. They found there was something they could not laugh at. Under their late hours their health gave way, or there was a



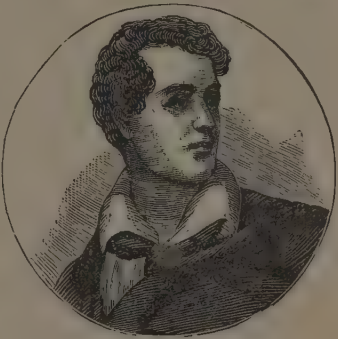
EDGAR A. POE.

death in the house. Of every green thing their soul was exfoliated. They found out that life was more than a joke. From the heart of God there blazed into their soul an earnestness they had never felt before. They awoke to their sinfulness and their immortality, and now they are at sixty or seventy years of age as appreciative of all innocent mirth as they ever were, but they are bent on a style of satisfaction which, in early life, they never hunted; the evening of their days brighter than the morning.

Then there are others who started out for financial success. They see how limber the rim of a man's hat is when he bows down before some one transpicuous. They felt they would like to see how the world looked from the window of a three thousand dollar turn-out. They thought they would like to have the morning sunlight tangled in the head-gear of a dashing span. The wanted the bridges in the Park to resound under the rataplan of their swift hoofs. They wanted a gilded baldrick, and so they started on the dollar hunt. They chased it up one street and chased it down another. They followed it when it burrowed in the cellar. They treed it in the roof. Wherever a dollar was expected to be, they were. They chased it across the ocean. They chased it across the land. They stopped not for the night. Hearing that dollar even in the darkness thrilled them as an Adirondack sportsman is thrilled at midnight by a loon's laugh. They chased that dollar to the money-vault. They chased it to the government treasury. They routed it from under the counter. All the hounds were out—all the pointers and the setters. They leaped the hedges for that dollar, and they cried: "Hark away! a dollar! a dollar!" And when at last they came upon it and had actually captured it, their excitement was like that of a falconer who has successfully flung his first hawk. In the morning of their life, O, how they devoured the prey! But there came a better time to their soul. They found out that an immortal nature cannot live on "greenbacks." They took up a Northern Pacific bond, and there was a hole in it through which they could look into the uncertainty of all earthly treasures. They saw some Ralston, living at the rate of twenty-five thousand dollars a month, leaping from San Francisco wharf because he could not continue to live at the same ratio. They saw the wizzen and paralytic bankers who had changed their souls into molten gold stamped with the image of the earth, earthly. They saw some great souls by avarice turned into *homunculi*, and they said to themselves: "I will seek after higher treasure." From that time they did not care whether they walked or rode, if Christ walked with them; nor whether they lived in a mansion or in a hut, if they dwelt under the shadow of the Almighty; nor whether they were robed in French broadcloth or in homespun, if they had the robe of the Saviour's righteousness; nor whether they were sandaled with morrocco or calf-skin, if they were shod with the preparation of the gospel. Now you see peace on their countenance. Now that man says: "What a fool I was to be enchanted with this world. Why, I have more satisfaction in five minutes in the service of God than I had in all the first years of my life while I was gain getting. I like this evening of my day a great deal better than I did the morning. In the morning I greedily devoured the prey; but now it is evening, and I am gloriously dividing the spoil."

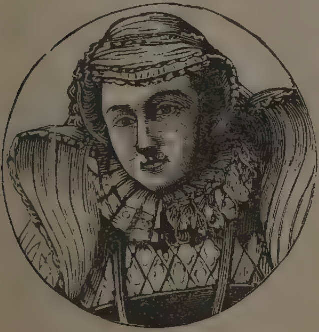
My readers, this world is a poor thing to hunt. It is healthful to go out in the woods and hunt. It rekindles the lustre of the eye. It strikes the brown of the autumnal leaf into the cheek. It gives to the rheumatic limbs a strength to leap like the roe. Christopher North's pet gun, the Muckle-moued-Meg, going off in the summer in the forests, had its echo in the winter-time in the eloquence that rang through the university halls of Edinburgh. It is healthy to go hunting in the fields; but I tell you that it is belittling and bedwarfing and belaming for a man to hunt this world.

The hammer comes down on the gun-cap, and the barrel explodes and kills you, instead of that which you are pursuing. When you turn out to hunt the world, the world turns out to hunt you; and as many a sportsman aiming his gun at a panther's heart has gone down under the striped claws, so, while you have been attempting to devour this world, the world has been devouring you. So it was with Lord Byron. So it was with Coleridge. So it was with Catherine of Russia. Henry II. went out hunting for this world, and its lances struck through his heart. Francis I. aimed at the world, but the assassin's dagger put an end to his ambition, and his life with one stroke. Mary, Queen of Scots, wrote on the window of her castle:



LORD BYRON.

"From the top of all my trust
Mishap hath laid me in the
dust."



MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

The Queen Dowager of Navarre was offered for her wedding day a costly and beautiful pair of gloves, and she put them on; but they were poisoned gloves, and they took her life. Better a bare hand of cold privation than a warm and poisoned glove of ruinous success. "Oh," says some young man, "I believe what you say. I am going to do that very thing. In the morning of my life I am going to devour the prey, and in the evening I shall divide the spoils of Christian character. I only want a little while to sow my wild oats, and then I will be good." Young man, did you ever take the census of all the old people? How many old people are there in your house? One, two, or none? How many in a vast assemblage? Only here and there a gray head, like the patches of snow here and there in the fields on a late April day. The fact is that the tides of the years are so strong that men go down under them before they get to be sixty, before they get to be fifty, before they get to be forty, before they get to be thirty; and if you, my young man, resolve that you will spend the morning of your days in devouring the prey, the probability is that you will never divide the spoils in the evening hour. He who postpones until old age the religion of Jesus Christ, postpones it forever. Where are the men who, thirty years ago, resolved to become Christians in old age, putting it off a certain number of years? They are in the lost world. They never got to be old. The railroad collision, or the steamboat explosion, or the slip on the ice, or the falling ladder, or the sudden cold put an end to their opportunities. They have never had an opportunity since, and never will have an opportunity again. They locked the door of heaven against their soul, and they threw away the key; and if they could break jail and come up shrieking to us, I do not think they would take two minutes to persuade us all to repentance. They chased the world, and they died in the chase. The wounded tiger turned on them. They failed to take the game that they pursued. Mounted on a swift courser, they leaped the hedge, but the courser fell on them and crushed them. Proposing to barter their soul for the world, they lost both and got neither.

While this is an encouragement to old people who are unpardoned, it is no encouragement to the young who are putting off the day of grace. This doctrine that the old may be repentant is to be taken cautiously. It is medicine that kills or cures. The same medicine, given to different patients, in one case it saves life, and in the other it destroys it. This possibility of repentance at the close of life may cure the old man while it kills the young. Be cautious in taking it.

There are those who come to a sudden and a radical change. You have noticed how short a time it is from morning to night—only seven or eight hours. You know that the day has a very brief life. Its heart beats twenty-four times, and then it is dead. How quick this transition in the character of these Benjaminites! "In the morning they shall devour the prey, and at night they shall divide the spoils." Is it possible that there shall be such a transformation in any of our characters? Yes, a man may be at seven o'clock in the morning an all-devouring worldling, and at seven o'clock at night he may be a peaceful, distributive Christian. Conversion is instantaneous. A man passes into the kingdom of God quicker than down the sky runs ziz-zag lightning. A man may be anxious about his soul for a great many years: that does not make him a Christian. A man may pray a great while: that does not make him a Christian. A man may resolve on the reformation of his character, and have that resolution going on a great while: that does not make a Christian. But the very instant when he flings his soul on the mercy of Jesus Christ, that instant is lustration, emancipation, resurrection. Up to that point he is going in the wrong direction; after that point he is going in the right direction. Before that moment he is a child of sin; after that moment he is a child of God. Before that moment hellward; after that moment heavenward. Before that moment devouring the prey; after that moment dividing the spoil. Five minutes is as good as five years. My reader, you know very well that the best things you have done you have done in a flash. You made up your mind in an instant to buy, or to sell, or to invest, or to stop, or to start. If you had missed that one chance, you would have missed it forever. Now just as precipitate and quick and spontaneous will be the ransom of your soul. This morning you were making a calculation. You got on the track of some financial or social game. With your pen or pencil you were pursuing it. This very morning you were devouring the prey; but to-night you are in a different mood. You find that all heaven is offered you. You wonder how you can get it for yourself and for your family. You wonder what resources it will give you now and hereafter. You are dividing peace and comfort and satisfaction and Christian reward in your soul. You are dividing the spoil.

I have said to persons: "When did you first become serious about your soul?" and they told me: "To-night." And to others: "When did you give your heart to God?" and they said: "To-night." And still to others: "When did you resolve to serve the Lord all the days of your life?" and they said: "To-night." I saw by the gayety of their apparel that when the grace of God struck them they were devouring the prey; but I saw also, in the flood of joyful tears, and in the kindling raptures on their brow, and in their exhilarant and transporting utterances, that they were dividing the spoil. If you have seen a large building when the lights were struck, you know that with one touch of electricity they all blazed. O, I would to God that the darkness of your souls might be broken up, and that by one quick, overwhelming, instantaneous flash of illumination you might be brought into the light and the liberty of the sons of God!

You see that religion is a different thing from what some of you supposed. You thought it was decadence; you thought religion was maceration; you thought it was highway robbery; that it struck one down and left him half dead; that it plucked out the eyes; that it plucked out the plumes of the soul; that it broke the wing and crushed the beak as it came clawing with its black talons through the air. No, that is not religion. What is religion? It is dividing the spoils. It is taking a defenceless soul and panoplying it for eternal conquest. It is the distribution of prizes by the king's hand, every medal stamped with a coronation. It is an exhilaration, an expansion. It is imparadisation. It is enthronement. Religion makes a man master of earth and death and hell. It goes forth to gather the medals of victory won by Prince Emanuel, and the diadems of heaven and the glories of realms terrestrial and celestial, and then, after ranging all worlds for everything that is resplendent, it divides the spoil.

What was it that James Turner, the famous English evangelist, was doing when in his dying moment he said: "Christ is all! Christ is all?" Why, he was entering into light; he was rounding the Cape of Good Hope; he was dividing the spoil. What was the aged Christian Quakeress doing when at eighty years of age she arose in the meeting one day and said: "The time of my departure is come. My grave clothes are falling off?" She was dividing the spoil.

What is Daniel now doing, the lion tamer? and Elijah who was drawn by the flaming coursers? and Paul, the rattling of whose chains made kings quake? and all the other victims of flood and fire and wreck and guillotine,—where are they? Dividing the spoil.

"Ten thousand times ten thousand,
  In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
  Throng up the steeps of light.

"'T is finished, all is finished,
  Their fight with death and sin.
Fling open-wide the golden gates,
  And let the victors in."

Oh, what a grand thing it is to be a Christian! We begin now to divide the spoil, but the distribution will not be completed to all eternity. There is a poverty-struck soul, there is a business-despoiled soul, there is a sin-struck soul, there is a bereaved soul,—why do you not come and get the spoils of Christian character, the comfort, the joy, the peace, the salvation that I offer you in my Master's name? Though your knees knock together in weakness, though your hand tremble in fear, though your eyes rain tears of uncontrollable weeping—come and get the spoils. Rest for all the weary. Pardon for all the guilty. Harbor for all the bestormed. Life for all the dead.

Though you are now children of the world, you may become heirs of heaven. Though this very morning you were devouring the prey, to-night, all worlds witnessing, you may divide the spoil.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

EXPULSION OF THE BIBLE.

Many persons are willing to acknowledge that the Bible is a lamp fit to be set on a parlor table, or in a nursery, or in a drawing-room; but they do not want to hear much about the Bible as a lantern,—something to carry about with you into all kinds of institutions, and into all kinds of circumstances. Yet I do not know why a lantern should disturb anything, save spiders and vermin and bats. Send it everywhere for the world's illumination.

But is this Bible such a wonderful book? Yes. It is the Kohinoor among diamonds; the mightiest power ever projected by the hand of God upon the nations. It is a well so deep that innumerable buckets come up with water enough to slake the thirst of all nations. It is like a nursery-man's garden, where the flowers and the fruits and the trees are so closely crowded that from that nursery you may plant a county or a state. One seed of that Word of God was planted a good many years ago, and it came up in the Reformation. Another seed was planted, and it came up the blood-red flower of the American Revolution. Another seed of the Word of God was planted, and it will come up the white flower of the Millennium. Mighty book! In courts of law, when the oath is administered, the witness is roughly told, "Kiss the book;" but we put this book to our lips, and give it the kiss of earnest affection, and say, "Take away all other books, but leave us this; capture all other weapons, but leave us this sword with which to conquer; take away all other friends, but leave us this counsellor; put out all other lights, but extinguish not this." Dear old book! Some have spit upon thee, and some have burned thee, and some have cast upon thee the lie; but I take thee to be my counsel in life, my joy in prosperity, my comfort in sorrow, my pillow in death, my song for eternity. Dear old Bible!

There are many who would like to crowd this Bible out from the common school, and they would like to crowd it out from the family, and they would like to crowd it out from all respectable associations, and they would like to crowd it to the very verge of the world, and then pick it up and fling it into the blackness of darkness forever. Well, this book is on trial, and you are the jurors. Now, prisoner, look upon the jury, and jury, look upon the prisoner. Is this book guilty or not guilty? Now is the time for us to discuss this question. If this Bible ought to be put out of the common schools, it ought to be put out immediately; let us go down to the schools, and pick up all the Old Testaments and the New Testaments, and hurl them out of the window, and look under the school desk lest there may be some loose leaves of God's holy Word, containing the story of a Saviour's sacrifice and of our heavenly inheritance; let us gather them all up, and not only throw them out of the window, but let us burn them up, lest by some evil wind they be blown back again into the school-house.

But if the Bible ought to be retained in the common schools, then let us decide in that direction. If, after the Bible be banished, the Christian Churches rise up and demand the re-enthronement of this book in the common-school system of this country, it will open a war such as the world has never seen. On the one side all the forces of our best civilization. On the other side all the forces of iniquity on earth and in perdition. If you have anything to say against the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools, speak out. As a minister of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as an American citizen, I want to be heard. I have been warned again and again that if I opened my mouth on these subjects it would be disastrous to me, have been threatened with all evil if I kept on in the advocacy of the cause of God and good morals; and men have gone so far they have once fired my house, attempting to consume my family, and a second time made the attempt; but if there are any people who have an idea that by such a process as that my lips shall be closed on this or any other subject involving the best interests of society, they are much mistaken.

The Bible ought to be kept in the schools because if you cast it out you decree that three-fourths of the population of this country shall have no religious culture at all. You tell me that the Bible ought to be in the family and in the Sabbath-school. Even so. But are you not aware that a great majority of the children in this country never see the inside of a Sabbath-school, and that in the majority of the families of this country God is not acknowledged and the Bible is not read? All that tens of thousands of children learn of God and Christ and the judgment day and the eternal world they learn in the three or four minutes at the opening of the day-school. If the statistics be accurate that this country is yet to be occupied by three hundred million immortals, then I say that that Christian man who votes for the expulsion of the Bible from the schools votes for the barring out from all the blessings and the excellencies of our holy religion two hundred million of the people. I ask if it is possible to maintain a Republic of self-governed, honest, pure, truthful citizens with so small an admixture of morals and religion? The man who votes to put out the Bible from the schools votes to make this land a nation of atheists, a nation of infidels, a nation of debauchees, a nation of outlaws. There is no ground-work for thorough, old-fashioned morals but the Word of God.

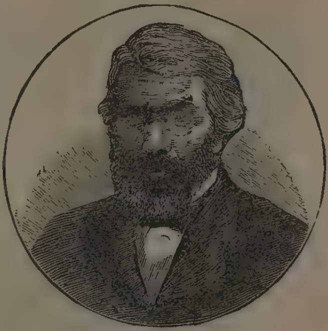
I am opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools because such a movement would be a war upon the consciences of men. The Roman Catholics, in this country, have no objections to the Bible in our common schools. What they propose is to have parochial schools where the whole system of Roman Catholicism can be taught. Then I tell you that when you put out the Bible from the schools you wound the feelings of nine-tenths of the Christian people of this country. When you drive out the Bible you please the infidels and atheists, and a great many who are loose in religion and loose in morals; but you wound in the very depths of the soul thousands and hundreds of thousands of Christian men and women who have builded up all their hopes for time and eternity on that old book, and believe it to be the chief corner-stone of this nation's prosperity. You say you will not send your children to the common schools if the Bible is kept there. I reply I will not send my children there if the Bible is cast out, and my conscience is as good as your conscience. Here is a hospital with a great many sick men. There is a man with a wounded arm, and he refuses to have any bandage on it, and he refuses to take any medicine of the surgeon. Then I see him start through the wards of the hospital, and what is he doing? He is tearing off the bandages of all the other men, and upsetting their medicine, and saying, "I don't want any bandages on my arm, and you shall not have any bandages on your arm." In other words these men say, "We don't want our children cultured in the knowledge of the Bible, and you shall not have your children cultured in the knowledge of the Bible." You say, "One man's conscience is as good as another man's conscience." I don't believe it. Suppose you were seeking a confidential clerk, and two men applied, and one man began by saying, "I reject the Bible; I have no faith in it." Then the other young man would say, "I believe in the Bible; I love it very much; it is the great ambition of my life to make my character correspond with the teachings of that book." Which young man would you take as your confidential clerk? Of course the latter. In other words, you realize that the conscience of the one man is better than the conscience of the other. I have no faith in a man's morality who says, "I despise God's Word; I cast out all its teachings; I will have nothing to do with it." Would I trust such a man in any relation of this life? No, I would not trust him at the ferry-gates with the ferry-master looking the other way; he would run through without paying his two cents! This proposition to put the Bible out of the schools is a war on three-fourths of the Christian people of this country.

I am opposed to this movement because the Bible seems so particularly adapted to the common schools. In an orchestra, one man sweeps the bow across the viol, and by that one instrument the other musicians chord up their instruments to concert pitch. So this thrumming of this harp of God's Word at nine o'clock, in the day-school, seems to bring into harmonious accord all the other lessons and employments of the day. What book is there that inculcates such lessons of morality and kindness and love and gentleness and patience and generosity and purity? Show me one man, one child, in all the world that has ever been injured by reading it. We want to have our children go down into the stream of God's Word and pluck the lilies from the banks and weave the Rose of Sharon in their hair. But remember that a great multitude of the children that come up to the public schools have no kind influences at home. Some are orphans, and some worse than orphans, for they have dissolute parents. How pleasant and beautiful and appropriate it is that the teacher should open the old Book and read to them: "Come unto Me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

What other book has so much simplicity, so much elegance, so much earnestness of style? It is a better discipline than mathematics. It is better history than Bancroft's. It is better philosophy than Dougall Stewart's. It is a better biography than Plutarch's. All the poems of earth strike their chime into this canto, and the beauties of the universe blossom in this royal flower, and the charm of river and lake and sea are hung in this one crystal. I went to one of our public schools. I heard the Scriptures read, and I heard them sing a song, and I thought to myself, after these five minutes of interview with God, all the hours of this day must be beneficently affected. There will be thousands of children gathered in our day-schools, and they will read of peace for all the troubled, pardon for all the guilty, and life for all the dead. Now, you who want the Bible out of the schools, go in, and hush up those exercises. Say, "Stop that music! Quit that reading! Down with the Bible in the common schools!"

Such expulsion implies the right to take away any book that acknowledges God or Christian principle. Is there a primer, is there a reader, is there a text-book in all our day-schools that somehow does not acknowledge the sanctity of the marriage relation, or the holiness of the Sabbath, or the importance of divine worship, or the existence of God? Now, drive the Bible out of the schools, and what is the next demand? Take away that primer. Take away that reader. How dare you use in your schools a reader which acknowledges the sanctity of the marriage relation, when there are tens of thousands of people who do not believe that there is any such sanctity? How dare you have that reader in your schools which admits that there is any holiness in the Sabbath, when there are thousands of people who deny it? How dare you have a text-book of any kind in your schools which has in it the word God spelled with a capital "G," when there are thousands of people in this country who do not believe there is any God? Yield to this impertinent demand for the expulsion of the Bible from the schools, and they will come with other infamous demands. It is the first step of a long series of steps. Suppose you are on a highway, and a robber meets you, and he says, "Your watch." You give him your watch. "Now," he says, "I'll take your pocket-book." You hand it to him. "Now," he says, "I'll take your penknife." You give it to him. "Now," he says, "I'll take your coat." You give him your coat. He strips you and pounds you and leaves you half dead by the road-side. When was the time to make resistance? At the very start. People come up, and they say, "Take the Bible out of the schools." Suppose we give it up? Then they will say, "Take this book and that book and the other book; throw them all out," until they leave the common school system stripped and half dead, not garments enough left to cover the nakedness of its folly. When is the time to resist such a demand? At the start; and not yielding once you will not have to yield afterward. The implication that these men have a right to take the Bible out of the common schools implies that they have a right to take out any book which inculcates moral and religious sentiments.

This movement throws suspicion on the Bible itself. What books are you going to have in your common schools? Webster's Dictionary? Yes. Kame's Elements of Criticism? Yes. Young's Night Thoughts to parse out of? Yes. Or the Poems of Tennyson, or the writings of Carlyle? Yes. Then when you say you do not want the Bible, do you not give the preference to every other book, and are you not saying to the rising generation, "These other books are safe, but the Bible is not safe?" If your child be consulting in regard


THOMAS CARLYLE.

to the companionship of ten or fifteen playmates in the street, and you say, "You may play with this child, and that, and that, and that; but not with that one," do you not throw suspicion upon the character of this last child? If we come into our common school system and say, "You may have all these other books, but not the Bible," is not that saying to all the boys and girls of this country, "The most unsafe book to have is the Bible?" In that way you give judgment against the sacred Scriptures in the mind of all the young people of the country?

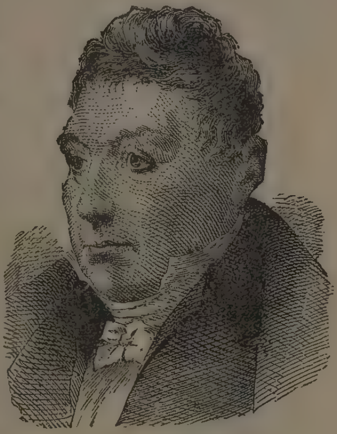
We oppose the ejection of the Bible from the common schools because the evidence of the best men of this country oppose such expulsion. What did George Washington say in his "Farewell Address?" "Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles." Daniel Webster says: "It has been held as a fundamental truth that religion is the only solid basis of morals, and that moral instruction not resting upon this basis is only building upon sand. It is a mockery and an insult to common sense to maintain that a school for the instruction of youth, from which Christian instruction is shut out, is not atheistical and infidel."

I would a great deal rather have my sentiments in sympathy with the sentiments of these men of the past than to have them in sympathy with many of the modern base politicians. There is a wide distinction between a Christian patriot,—a politician like Theodore Frelinghuysen or Governor Briggs of the past,—men who were as eminent in the Church of Christ as in political circles,—and the base politicians. I think the highest style of a man is the consecrated Christian patriot. But alas! for that filthy herd which tramp through many of our cities, calling themselves politicians. Base and low in all their morals; degraded until there is no lower depth of degradation into which they can sink; born in the cesspool of political caucus; cursed to crawl on their belly through the slush and slime of partisanship; demanding the thrusting out of the Bible to please the foreign vote; anxious to lick the filthy heel of the emigrant before he has had time to wash his feet. I abhor them. The pure politicians of this and past times have declared themselves in favor of the retention of the Bible in the schools.

It is a supreme book from the hands of a Supreme God, and has a right to go anywhere. Suppose a proclamation should be made by the President of the United States, and some of us should gather a regiment, and say, "You may send that proclamation wherever else you like, but don't send it here." A few officers of the Government would come out and put an end to that rebellion. Suppose we crossed the sea and fenced off a part of Great Britain, and should say, "We are very willing that Queen Victoria shall reign over all Great Britain save these few acres, which we mean to keep ourselves." A few officers would come forth and put an end to that rebellion. Now, this proposition to put the Bible out of the common schools is rebellion against the throne of God and secession from the divine government. This book is a proclamation from the throne of God, and who has a right to stand in the way of it? It is crying out in the face of high heaven, " O Lord, go anywhere with Thy book, but keep out of our common schools." The Bible being a supreme book from the hand of a Supreme God, has a right to go anywhere.

I still further am opposed to the expulsion of the Bible from the common schools, because the common school is a child of Protestantism, and she has a right to do what she will with her own. The Catholics of this country will tell you what I am telling you now. Go through Spain and France and Italy and show me a common school. You cannot find one. The genius of the Catholic Church is against the indiscriminate education of the common people, and of course as they propose to go off into their parochial schools, and gradually and peacefully withdraw, they do not now propose that we shall make any radical change to please them. They plainly tell us so. Suppose I come into your house and say, "I don't like the way you dress your child." "Well," you would say, "that is a curious criticism. I didn't ask you whether you were pleased or not." "Well," I say, "you must take that chain of gold off your child's neck, or I'll leave the house." Then you would say, "Leave." Now, the common-school system is a child of Protestantism. If any class of men shall come from any land, or from any form of religious belief, and say, "We don't like that chain of gold, the Word of God, around the neck of your common-school system," then we will say, "Well, then, you will have to go where you like it better." But you say, "That will involve the question of taxation, and there will be a demand for appropriations of money for Presbyterian schools, and then they will want appropriations made for Roman Catholic schools, and this whole question of taxation will become involved, and disastrously so. I reply, without discussing that question, that better for us that all the school funds go away from us, and that our common schools be supported by the charities of the Christian Church, than that the Bible be cast out of the schools.

I go further, and oppose this movement because the God of the Bible has had this land under His benediction, and He intends it to be a Bible-reading and God-fearing nation. He has plainly drawn a mark all around this nation, and said, in His Providence, "Wherever else they do not have the Bible, you shall have it here. Wherever else God is not honored, you shall honor Him here." Look at the history of our nation. Do you notice at what point in the world's history America was discovered? Why was not this land discovered ages before? Civilized men would very much have liked to look upon it. There were adventurers who would have liked to have picked out this gem of the sea long before the time of Columbus and Vespucius. Ah! it was because the right kind of men to people this land had not been born. The fires in which they were to be purified were not yet kindled. When God had created a stalwart race, and ordained them for the high work of settling this country, and laying the foundation of a higher style of civilization than the world had ever known, and they had started out on their embassy of light and freedom and religion, then God suddenly dropped the veil from this continent, and there arose before the astonished vision of the people the splendors of this Western world. Then come on down from the discovery of America to the Revolutionary war. God was as certainly in the lives of Washington and Lafayette and Marion and Kosciusco as He was in the lives of Moses and Daniel and Joshua. God was no more present at Megiddo and Jericho than at White Plains and Valley Forge. Then come on down still further in our history until the days which you remember. The great question North, South, East and West was, "How shall we get rid of American slavery?" Some proposed one thing and others another. Some men said, "Steal the slave." That did not do. Some said, "Try moral suasion." That did not do. Some said, "Buy the bondmen out of their serfdom." That would not do. The


LAFAYETTE.

more the question was discussed the less it came to an intelligent decision; when the Lord rose up and said, "O, you men of the North and the South, you cannot settle that question. I will settle it. This is my nation. You want that cancer of slavery cut out and it shall be done." And then putting the sword of battle on one side of that black cancer, and the sword of battle on the other side of that black cancer, it dropped black and bleeding into hell. God has been with us all along, doing for us what the statesmen of the North and South could not achieve.

The Hollanders and the Puritans and the Huguenots were men of the Bible, and they took possession of the land in the name of the God of the Bible. Now suppose I come into your house and say, "I don't like that book on your table." Suppose I come and sit at your banquet and say, "I don't like this article of food you set before me." You do not ask me to stay in the presence of the book or the banquet. And I am in favor of the largest liberty for any man who wants to withdraw from house or table or the common schools. Go to China or India or some other place where they have no Bible. Go there; do not stand here, and with impertinent demand ask that we give up this glorious treasure which is the chief pride of our common schools.

Secular education without religious education is worse than none. The President of the United States sent to Congress a paragraph in his Message which most of us approve, and that is that there ought to be some education before people are allowed to vote, and yet what does the capacity of a man to read amount to if he read bad books? What does a man's capacity to write amount to if he writes bad sentiments. Better not be able to read or write at all. Knowledge is power for good if sanctified. Knowledge is power for evil if unsanctified. Robespierre and Rousseau and Byron were illustrations of what men with magnificent mental endowments will do when they have no moral restraint.

Those men might better have been born and lived and died on the lowest round of ignorance than to have risen and cursed the world with their cruelties and nastiness. The youth of this country need something besides reading and writing and arithmetic, in order that they may be prepared for good citizenship. The great pest of this country to-day is the educated villains. They know enough. They know too much. They know everything.

ROBESPIERRE.

There is no machine more useful than a locomotive. Here I see one standing. Piston-rods, cranks, axles, cylinders, driving-wheels, throttle-valve, all perfect. A good engineer gets on that locomotive, fastens it to a long train of cars, drags an immense value of freightage or life across the continent. He does well. A reckless engineer comes up to that same locomotive, gets on it, and puts it at the rate of fifty miles an hour; comes near a dangerous curve, leaps off, while the train goes on into shrieking and death. That is just the difference between educated mind without moral principle, and educated mind with moral principle. In either case it is a powerful engine. In the one case it drags a long line of good influences across the earth. In the other case Christian principle jumps off and moral restraint jumps off, leaving the train to go into terrific demolition. Ignorance is bad, but intelligence is worse, if immoral. Almost everybody talks about the days of Greece and Rome. They had so much intelligence, so many orators and painters, and poets and thinkers. No doubt about it. But how about the morals of Greece and Rome? Why is it that when a gentleman is traveling with his family in Europe, and he comes to the museums containing the relics of ancient art, that the janitor taps him on the shoulder and says, "Only gentlemen will pass in there." Why? It is because the paintings and the sculpture of ancient Greece and Rome were abhorrent to all decency, and splendid Corinth and magnificent Pompeii were worse than the Five Points in the worst days of the Five Points. Intelligence, art, eloquence, without the Christian religion, is defamation, ruin, disaster, woe.

Protestants, the reason discussion of this subject ends in nothing in most cases is because we mix it up with the Roman Catholics. They are not opposed to the Bible in the schools. Why then bring them into the consideration? What do you make in the discussion of this subject by rousing the ire of the Roman Catholics? What has all the persecution against that Church in this country accomplished? They have four thousand churches; they have over fifty theological seminaries; they have over thirty colleges; they have over four million members. "O!" says some person, "we shall have the *auto-da-fé* and the Inquisition in this country." I do not believe it. My confidence is in the Lord God Almighty, and in the moral education of the people. Let us stick to that, and not in any wise go around and discuss questions that are irrelevant. Friends of the Bible, wake up! You are letting this question go by default. Some of the religious newspapers have gone over to the other side, and there are a great many ministers who are weak-kneed on this subject. Friends of God, speak out for King James's translation. If you love your Bible, stand by it. It is not much you have to do in this country for the maintenance of your religious faith. "O!" says some man, "you are all behind the time. We are in favor of progress. The Bible used to do very well in the schools, but we have progressed now beyond that." Yes, I am in favor of progress, but I do not believe in progress over a precipice. I say, let every other book go out of the common schools rather than this book. Let your arithmetics go. Our children can get along better without knowing how to count their earthly treasures than without this heavenly arithmetic which presents the figures of an eternal inheritance. Let your geographies go. Our children can get along without knowing the face of the earth rather than not knowing about the hills of light and the mountains of joy and the seas of glory that await the redeemed spirit. Let all the books on botany go. Our children can get along without knowing the nature of the plants and flowers of the earth better than to be ignorant of the eternal springtime of heaven. Let the public school teachers open the Bible with unusual earnestness. Read the chapters that you can find most adapted to the youthful mind. Then join in prayer before God, and while the hands of sin and superstition are trying to pull down this Bible out of the common schools, and pull it down from other places, lift it high in the estimation of the children under your charge, and say, "O, how I love Thy law. It is my meditation all the day."

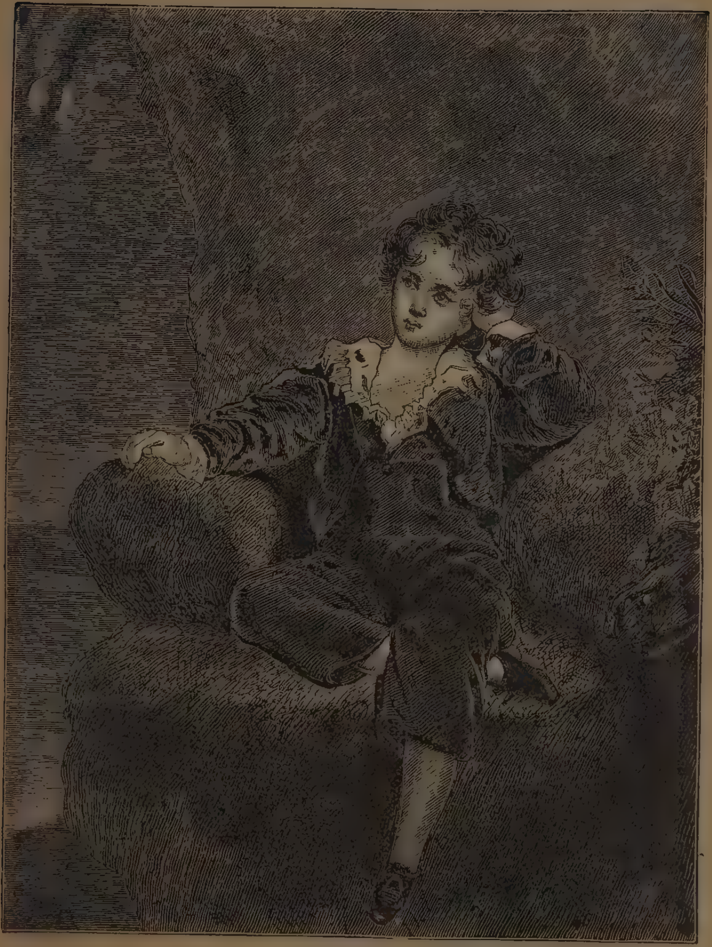
I want you to set me down as the sworn and uncompromising friend of that dear old book. I should feel myself unworthy my ancestors, the Puritans and the Hollanders, many of whom died for their faith, yea, I should expect to be found friendless at the judgment seat of Christ if in the hour, when the Bible is on trial, I should prove recreant. It will be a sweet consolation when we come to die, if we can feel then that we never did one thing to injure the influence of that old book. That dying hour may be a time of poverty and cruelty to us, and the pillow may be jerked out from under our head. But that man sleeps well the last sleep who has this book for his pillow. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and amen!

CHAPTER XXXV.

"WHAT OF OUR CHILDREN?"

Judah, when describing the tenderness and affection which Jacob felt toward Benjamin, the youngest son of that patriarchal family, said: "His life is bound up in the lad's life," but they are words just as appropriate to many another parent. I have known parents that seemed to have but little interest in their children. A father says: "My son must look out for himself. If he comes up well, all right; if he turns out badly, I cannot help it. I am not responsible for his behavior. He must take the same risk in life that I took." As well might the shepherd throw a lamb into a den of lions, and then say: "Little lamb, look out for yourself."

It is generally the case that even the beast looks after its young. I have gone through the woods on a summer's day, and I have heard a great outcry in a bird's nest, and I have climbed up to see what was the matter. I found out that the birds were starving and that the mother bird had gone off, not to come back again. But that is an exception. It is generally the case that the old bird will pick your eyes out rather than let you come nigh its brood. The lion will rend you in twain if you approach too nearly the whelps; the fowl in the barn-yard, clumsy-footed and heavy-winged, flies fiercely at you if you come too near the little group, and God intended every father and mother to be the protection and the help of the child. Jesus comes into every dwelling and says to the father or mother: "You have been looking after this child's body and mind; the time has come when you ought to be looking after its immortal soul." "What is to become



CHILDHOOD.

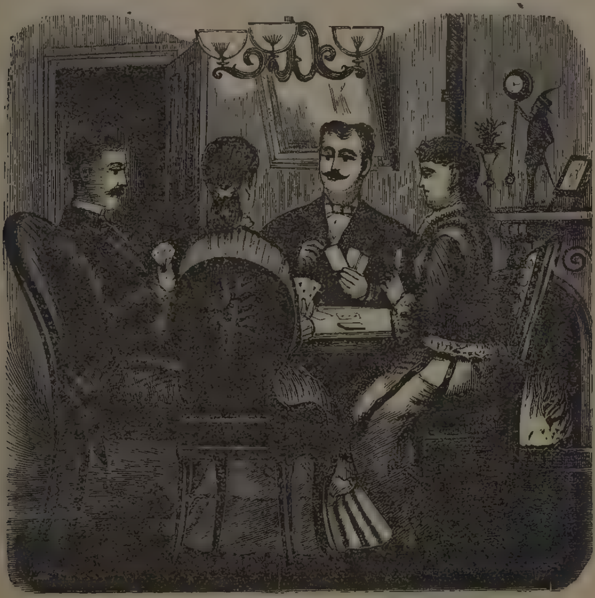
of the child? What will be its history? Will it choose paths of virtue or vice? Will it accept Christ or reject him? Where will it spend eternity?"

I read of a vessel that foundered. The boats were launched; many of the passengers were struggling in the water. A mother with one hand beat the waves, and with the other hand lifted up her little child toward the life-boat crying: "Save my child! Save my child!" The impassioned outcry of that mother is the prayer of many hundreds of Christian people.

The first cause of parental anxiety is the inefficiency and imperfection of parents themselves. We have a slight hope, all of us, that our children may escape our faults. We hide our imperfections, and think they will steer clear of them. Alas, there is a poor prospect of that. There is more probability that they will choose our vices than choose our virtues. There is something like sacredness in parental imperfections when the child looks upon them. The folly of the parents is not so repulsive when the child looks at it. He says: "Father indulges in it; mother indulges in it; it can't be so bad." Your boy, ten years of age, goes up a back street smoking his cigar—an old stump that he found in the street—and a neighbor accosts him and says: "What are you doing this for? What would your father say if he knew it?" The boy says: "O, father does that himself!" There is not one that would deliberately choose that his children should, in all things, follow his example, and it is the consciousness of imperfection on our part as parents that makes us most anxious for our children." We are also distressed on account of the unwisdom of our discipline and instruction. It requires a great deal of ingenuity to build a house or fashion a ship; but more ingenuity to build the temple of a child's character, and launch it on the great ocean of time and eternity. Where there is one that seems qualified for the work, there seems to be twenty parents who miserably fail.

Here is a father who says: "My child shall know nothing but religion; he shall see nothing but religion." The boy is aroused at 6 o'clock in the morning to recite the Ten Commandments. He is awakened off the sofa on Sunday night to see how much he knows of the Westminster Catechism. It is religion morning, noon and night. Passages of Scripture are plastered on the bed-room wall. He looks for the day of the month in a religious almanac. Every minister that comes to the house is told to take the boy aside and talk to him and tell him what a great sinner he is. After a while the boy comes to that period of life when he is too old for chastisement, and too young to know and feel the force of moral principle. Father and mother are sitting up for the boy to come home. It is 9 o'clock at night—10 o'clock—it is 12 o'clock—it is 12.30, and they hear the night key jingle in the door. They say he is coming. George goes very softly through the hall, hoping to get upstairs before he is accosted. The father says: "George, where have you been?" "Been out!" Yes, he has been out, and he has been down, and he is on the broad road to destruction, for this life and the life to come. Father says: "There is no use in the Ten Commandments; the Catechism seems to me to be an utter failure." Ah, my friend, you make a very great mistake. You stuffed that child with religion until he could not digest it; you made that which is a joy in many households an abhorrence in yours. A man in mid-life said to me: "I can't become a Christian. In my father's house I got such a prejudice against religion I don't want any of it. My father was one of the best men that ever lived, but he had such severe notions about things, and he jammed religion down my throat, until I don't want any of it, sir." There have been some who have erred in that direction.

There are households where mother pulls one way and father pulls the other. Father says: "My son, I told you the first time I caught you in a falsehood I would chastise you, and now I am going to do it." Mother says: "Don't, let him off this time." In some families it is all scolding and fretfulness with the child; from Monday morning to Saturday night it is that style of culture. The boy is picked at, and picked at, and picked at. Now you might better give one sound chastisement and have done with it, than to indulge in the perpetual scolding and fretfulness. There is more health in one good thunderstorm than in three or four days of cold drizzle. Here is a parent who says: "I will not err on the side that parent has erred, in being too strict with his children. I will let mine do as they please. If they want to come in to prayers, they can; if they want to play at cards, they can; they can do anything they please—there shall be no hindrance. Go it! Here are tickets for the



PLAYING AT CARDS.

opera and theater, son. Take your friends with you. Do whatever you desire." One day a gentleman comes in from the bank to his father's office and says: "They want to see you at the bank a minute." Father goes into the bank. The cashier says: "Is that your check?" Father looks at it and says: "No, I never gave that check; I never cross a 't' in that way; I never make the curl to a 'y' in that way. It is not my check; that's a forgery. Send for the police!"

"Ah," says the cashier, "don't be so quick; your son did that!" The fact was that the boy had been out in dissipating circles, and ten dollars and fifty dollars went in that direction, and he had been treated and he had to treat others, and the boy felt he must have five hundred dollars to keep himself in that circle. That night the father sits up for the son to come home. It is 1 o'clock before he comes into the hall. He comes in very much flushed, his eye glaring and his breath offensive. Father says: "My son, how can you do so? I have given you everything you wanted and everything to make you comfortable and happy, and now I find, in my old age, that you are a spendthrift, a libertine and a drunkard." The son says: "Now, father, what's the use of your talking in that way? You told me I might have a good time, and to go it. I have been acting on your suggestion, that's all."

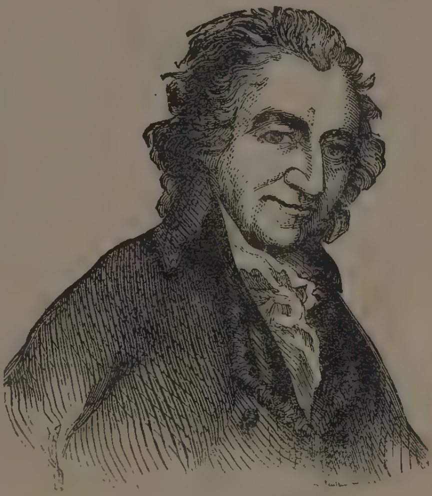
And so one parent errs on one side, and another parent errs on the other, and how to strike a happy medium between severity and too great leniency, and train our sons and daughters for usefulness on earth and bliss in heaven, is a question which agitates every Christian household. Where so many good men and women have failed, is it strange that we should sometimes doubt the propriety of our theory and the accuracy of our kind of government?

Parental anxiety often arises from an early exhibition of sinfulness in the child. The morning-glories bloom for a little while under the sun, and then they shut up as the heat comes on; but there are flowers along the Amazon that blaze their beauty for weeks at a time; but the short-lived morning glory fulfills its mission as well as the Victoria Regia. There are some people who take forty, fifty or sixty years to develop. Then there are little children who fling their beauty on the vision and vanish. They are morning-glories that can not stand the glare of the hot noon sun of trial. You have all known such little children. They were pale; they were ethereal; there was something very wonderfully deep in the eye; they had a gentle foot and soft hand, and something almost supernatural in their behavior—ready to be wafted away. You had such a one in your household. Gone now! It was too delicate a plant for this rough world. The heavenly gardener saw it and took it in. We make splendid Sunday-school books out of such children, but they almost always die. I have noticed, that for the most part the children that live sometimes get cross, and pick up bad words in the street, and quarrel with brother and sister, and prove unmistakably that they are wicked—as the Bible says, going astray from the womb, speaking lies. See the little ones in the Sabbath class, so sunshiny and beautiful, you would think they were always so, but mother, seated a little way off, looks over at these children and thinks of the awful time she had to get them ready. After the boy or girl comes a little further on in life, the mark of sin upon them is still more evident. The son comes in from a pugilistic encounter in the streets, bearing the marks of a defeat. The daughter practices positive deception, and the parent says: "What shall I do? I can't always be correcting and scolding, and yet these things must be stopped." It is especially sad if the parent sees his own faults copied by the child. It is a very hard work to pull up a nettle that we ourselves planted. We remember that the greatest frauds that ever shook the banking-houses of the country started from a boy's deception a good many years ago; and the gleaming blade of the murderer is only another blade of the knife with which the boy struck at his comrade. The cedar of Lebanon, that wrestles, with the blast, started from seed lodged in the side of the mountain, and the most tremendous dishonesties of the world once toddled out from the cradle. All these things make parents anxious.

Anxiety on the part of parents also arises from the consciousness that there are so many temptations thrown all around our young people. It may be almost impossible to take a castle by siege—straightforward siege—but suppose in the night there is a traitor within, and he goes down and draws the bolt and swings open the great door, and then the castle falls immediately. That is the trouble with the hearts of the young; they have foes without and foes within. There are a great many who try to make our young people believe that it is a sign of weakness to be pure. The man will toss his head and take dramatic attitudes and tell of his own indiscretions, and ask the young man if he would not like to do the same. And they call him verdant, and they say he is green and unsophisticated, and wonder how he can bear the Puritanical straight-jacket. They tell him he ought to break from his mother's apron strings, and they say: "I will show you all about town. Come with me. You ought to see the world. It won't hurt you. Do as you please; it will be the making of you." After awhile the young man says: "I don't want to be odd, nor can I afford to sacrifice these friends, and I'll go and see for myself." From the gates of hell there goes a shout of victory. Farewell to all innocence—farewell to all early restraints favorable to that innocence which, once gone, never comes back. I heard one of the best men I ever knew, seventy-five years of age, say: "Sir, God has forgiven me for all the sins of my lifetime. I know that; but there is one sin I committed at twenty years of age that I never will forgive myself for. It sometimes comes over me overwhelmingly, and it absolutely blots out my hope of heaven." Young man, hear it. How many traps there are set for our young people! That is what makes parents so anxious. Here are temptations for every form of dissipation and every stage of it. The young man, when he first goes into dissipation, is very particular where he goes. It must be a fashionable hotel. He could not be tempted into these corner nuisances, with red-stained glass and a mug of beer painted on the sign-board. You ask the young man to go into that place and he would say: "Do you mean to insult me?" No; it must be a marble-floored bar-room. There must be no lustful pictures behind the counter; there must be no drunkard hiccoughing while he takes his glass It must be a place where elegant gentlemen come in and click their cut-glass and drink to the announcement of flattering sentiment. But the young man can not always find that kind of a place; yet he has a thirst and it must be gratified. The down-grade is steeper now, and he is almost at the bottom. Here they sit in an oyster cellar around a card table, wheezing, bloated and bloodshot, with cards so greasy you can hardly tell who has the best hand. But never mind; they are only playing for drink. Shuffle away! shuffle away! The landlord stands in his shirt-sleeves, with hands on his hips, watching the game and waiting for another call to fill up the glasses. It is the hot breath of eternal woe that flushes that young man's cheek. In the jets of gaslight I see the shooting out of the fiery tongue of the worm that never dies. The clock strikes twelve; it is the tolling of the bell of eternity at the burial of a soul. Two hours pass on and they are all sound asleep in their chairs. Landlord says: "Come, now, wake up; it's time to shut up." They look up and say: "What?" "It's time to shut up." Push them out into the air. They are going home. Let the wife crouch in the corner, and the children hide under the bed. They are going home! What is the history of that young man? He began his dissipation at a fashionable hotel, and completed his damnation in the worst of grog-shops.

But sin even does not stop here. It comes to the door of the drawing-room. There are men of leprous hearts that go into the very best classes of society. They are so fascinating—they have such a bewitching way of offering their arm. Yet the poison of asps is under the tongue, and their heart is hell. At first their sinful devices are hidden, but after awhile they begin to put forth their talons of death. Now they begin to show really what they are. Suddenly—although you could not have expected it, they were so charming in their manner, so fascinating in their address—suddenly a cloud, blacker than was ever woven of midnight or hurricane, drops upon some domestic circle. There is agony in the parental bosom that none but the Lord God Almighty can measure—an agony that wishes that the children of the household had been swallowed by the grave, when it would be only a loss of body instead of a loss of soul. What is the matter with that household? They have not had the front windows open in six months or a year. The mother's hair suddenly turned white; father, hollow-cheeked and bent over prematurely, goes down the street. There has been no death in that family—no loss of property. Has madness seized upon them? No! no! A villain, kid-gloved, patent-leathered, with gold chain and graceful manner, took that cup of domestic bliss, elevated it high in the air until the sunlight struck it, and all the rainbows danced about the brim, and then dashed it down in desolation and woe, until all the harpies of darkness clapped their hands with glee, and all the voices of hell uttered a loud ha! ha! Oh, there are scores and hundreds of homes that have been blasted, and if the awful statistics could be fully set before you, your blood would freeze into a solid cake of ice at the heart. Do you wonder that fathers and mothers are anxious about their children, and that they ask themselves the questions day and night: What is to become of them? What will be their destiny?

Let me tell you, parents, that a great deal of anxiety will be lifted if you will begin early with your children. Tom Paine said: "The first five years of my life I became an infidel." A vessel goes out to sea; it has been five days out. A storm comes on it; it springs a leak; the helm will not work; everything is out of order. What is the matter? The ship is not sea-worthy, and never was. It is a poor time to find it out now. Under the fury of the storm the vessel goes down, with two hundred and fifty passengers, to a watery grave. The time to make the ship sea-worthy was in the dry dock, before it started. Alas for us, if we wait until our children get out into the world before we try to bring upon them the influences of Christ's religion! I tell you the dry dock of the Christian home is the place where we are to fit them for usefulness and for heaven. In this world, under the storm of vice and temptation, it will be too late. In the domestic circle you decide whether your child shall be truthful or false—whether it shall be generous or penurious. You can tell by the way a child divides an apple just what its future history will be. You ought to oversee



THOMAS PAINE.

the process. If the child take nine-tenths of the apple, giving the other tenth to his sister, if he should live to be one hundred he will be grasping and want the biggest piece of everything. I stood in a house in one of the Long Island villages, and I saw a beautiful tree, and I said to the owner: "That is a very fine tree, but what a curious crook there is in it?" "Yes," said he, "I planted that tree, and when it was a year old I went to New York and worked as a mechanic for a year or two, and when I came back I found that they had allowed something to stand against the tree; so it has always had that crook." And so I thought it was with the influence upon children. If you allow anything to stand in the way of moral influences against a child on this side or that side, to the latest day of its life on earth and through all eternity it will show the pressure. No wonder Lord Byron was bad. Do you know his mother said to him when she saw him one day limping across the floor with his unsound foot. "Get out of my way, you lame brat!" What chance for a boy like that?

Two young men come to the door of sin. They consult whether they will go in. The one young man goes in and the other retreats. "Oh," you say, "the last had better resolution." No, that was not it. The first young man had no early good influence; the last had been piously trained, and when he stood at the door of sin discussing the matter he looked around as if to see some one, and he felt an invisible hand on his shoulder, saying: "Don't go in! don't go in!" Whose hand was it? A mother's hand, fifteen years ago gone to dust. A gentleman was telling me of the fact that some years ago there were two young men who stopped at the door of the Park Theater, in New York. The question was whether they should go in. That night there was to be a very immoral play enacted in the Park Theater. One man went in; the other staid out. The young man who went in went on from sin to sin, and through a crowd of iniquities, and died in the hospital of delirium tremens. The other young man who retreated chose Christ, went into the gospel, and is now one of the most eminent ministers of Christ in this country. And the man who retreated gave as his reason for turning back from the Park Theater that night, that there was an early voice within him, saying: "Don't go in! don't go in!" And for that reason, my readers, I believe so much in Bible classes. But there is something better than the Bible class, and that is the Sunday-school class. I like it because it takes children at an earlier point; and the infant class I like still better, because it takes children before they begin to walk or to talk straight and puts them on the road to heaven. You can not begin too early. You stand on the bank of a river flowing by. You can not stop that river, but you travel days and days toward the source of it, and you find after awhile where it comes down dropping from the rock, and with your knife you make a course in this or that direction for the dropping to take, and you decide the course of the river. You stand and see your children's character rolling on with great impetuosity and passion, and you can not affect them. Go up toward the source where the character first starts, and decide that it shall take the right direction, and it will follow the path you give it.

But I want you to remember, O father! O mother! that it is what you do that is going to affect your children, and not what you say. You tell your children to become Christians, while you are not, and they will not. Do you think Noah's family would have gone into the ark if he had not gone in? They would say: "No, there is something about that boat that is not right; father has not gone in." You can not push children into the kingdom of God; you have got to pull them in. There has been many a General in a tower or castle looking at his army fighting, but that is not the kind of a man to arouse enthusiasm among his troops. It is a Garibaldi or Napoleon I., who leaps into the stirrups, and dashes into the conflict, and has his troops following him with wild huzzas. So you can not stand off in your impenitent state and tell your children to go ahead into the Christian life and have them go. You must yourself dash into the Christian conflict; you must lead them and not tell them to go. Do you know that all the instructions you give to your children in a religious direction goes for nothing unless you illustrate it in your own life? The teacher at the school takes a copybook, writes a specimen of good writing across the top of the page, but he makes a mistake in one letter of the copy. The boy comes along on the next line, copies the top line, and makes the mistake, and if there be fifteen lines on that page they will have the mistake there was in the copy on the top. The father has an error in his life—a very great error. The son comes along and copies it now, to-morrow, next year, copies it to the day of his death. It is what you are, not so much what you teach. Have a family altar. Let it be a cheerful place, the brightest room in your house. Do not wear your children's knees out with long prayers. Have the whole exercise spirited. If you have a melodeon, or an organ, or a piano in the house, have it open. Then lead in prayers. If you cannot make a prayer of your own, take Matthew Henry's Prayers, or the Episcopal Prayer Book. None better than that. Kneel down with your little ones morning and night, and commend them to God. Do you think they will ever get over it? Never! After you are under the sod a good many years there will be some powerful temptation around that son, but the memory of father and mother at morning and evening prayers will have its effect upon him; it will bring him back from the path of sin and death. But I want you to make a strict mark, a sharp, plain line between innocent hilarity on the part of your children and a vicious proclivity. Do not think your boys will go to ruin because they make a racket. A glum, unresponsive child makes the worst form of a villain. Children, when they are healthy, always make a racket. I want you, at the very first sign of depravity in the child, to correct it. Do not laugh because it is smart. If you do you will live to cry because it is malicious. Do not talk of your children's frailties lightly in their presence, thinking they do not understand you; they do understand. Do not talk disparagingly of your child, making him feel that he is a reprobate. Do not say to your little one: "You're the worst child I ever knew." If you do, he will be the worst man you ever knew.

Are your children safe for heaven? You can tell better than any one else. I put you the question: "Are your children safe for heaven?" I heard of a mother who, when the house was afire, in the excitement of the occasion, got out a great many of the valuable things—many choice articles of furniture—but did not think to ask until too late: "Is my child safe?" It was too late then. The flames had encircled all; the child was gone! Oh, my dear reader, when sea and land shall burn in the final conflagration, will your children be safe?

I wonder if what I have written will not strike a chord in some one who had a good father and mother, but is not yet a Christian?

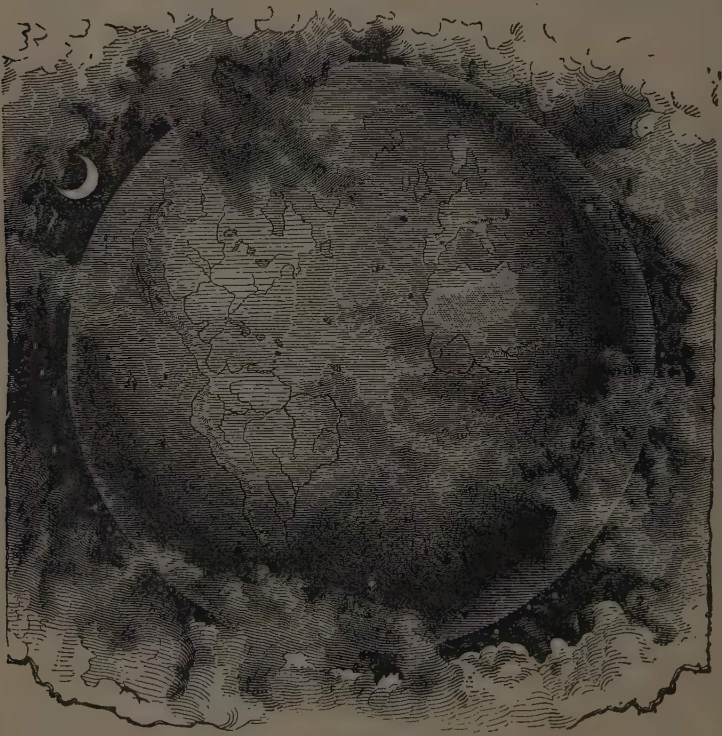
God wants you to have that memory revived. Your dear, Christian mother, how she loved you! You remember when you were sick how kindly she attended you; the night was not too long, and you never asked her to turn the pillow but she did it. You remember her prayers, also; you remember how you broke your mother's heart. You remember her sorrow over your waywardness; you remember the old place where she did you so many kindnesses; the chairs, the table, the door-sill where you played, the tones of her voice. Why, you can think them back now. Though they were borne long ago on the air, they come ringing through your soul to-day, calling you by the first name. You are not "Mr." to her; it is just your plain first name. Is not this the time when her prayers will be answered? If you should come to Christ now, amid all the throngs of heaven the gladdest of them would be your Christian parents, who are in glory waiting for your redemption. Angels of God, shout the tidings, the lost has come back again; the dead is alive! Ring all the bells of heaven at the jubilee!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SEQUENCE OF EVIL COMPANIONS.

While yet people thought that the world was flat, and thousands of years before they found out that it was round, Isaiah intimated the shape of it, God sitting upon the circle of the earth. The most beautiful figure in all geometry is the circle. God made the universe on the plan of a circle. There are in the natural world straight lines, angles, parallelograms, diagonals, quadrangles; but these evidently are not God's favorites. Almost everywhere where you find him geometrizing you find the circle dominant, and if not the circle then the curve, which is a circle that died young. If it had lived long enough it would have been a full orb, a periphery. An ellipse is a circle pressed only a little too hard at the sides. Giant's Causeway in Ireland shows what God thinks of mathematics. There are many thousand columns of rocks—octagonal, hexagonal, pentagonal. These rocks seem to have been made by rule and by compass. Every artist has his molding-room where he may make fifty shapes, but he chooses one shape as preferable to all the others. I will not say that the Giant's Causeway was the world's molding-room, but I do say out of a great many figures God seems to have selected the circle as the best. The stars in a circle, the moon in a circle, the sun in a circle, the universe in a circle, and the throne of God the center of that circle.

When men build churches they ought to imitate the idea of the great Architect and put the audience in a circle, knowing that the tides of emotion roll more easily that way than in straight lines. Six thousand years ago God flung this world out of his right hand; but he did not throw it out in a straight line but curvilinear, with a lease of love holding it so as to bring it back again. The world started from his hand pure and Edenic. It has been rolling on through regions of moral ice and distemper. How long it will roll God only knows; but it will in due time make a complete circuit and come back to the place where it started—the hand of God, pure and Edenic.



THE EARTH.

The history of the world goes in a circle. Why is it the shipping in our day is improving so rapidly? It is because men are imitating the old model of Noah's ark. A ship carpenter gives that as his opinion. Although so much derided by small wits that ship of Noah's time beat the Etruria and the Germanic, of which we boast so much. Where is the ship on the sea to-day that could outride a deluge in which the heaven and the earth were wrecked, landing all the passengers in safety, two of each kind of living creatures, thousands of species. Pomology will go on with its achievements until after many centuries the world will have plums and pears equal to the Paradisaical. The art of gardening will grow for centuries, and after the Downings and Mitchells of the world have done their best, in the far future the art of gardening will come up to the arborescence of the year 1. If the makers of colored glass go on improving they may in some centuries be able to make something equal to the east window of York Minster, which was built in 1290. We are six centuries behind those artists, but the world must keep on toiling until it has made the complete circuit and come up to the skill of those very men. If the world continues to improve in masonry we shall have after a while, perhaps after the advance of centuries, mortar equal to that which I saw in the wall of an exhumed English city, built in the time of the Romans, 1,600 years ago—that mortar to-day is as good as the day in which it was made, having outlasted the brick and the stone. I say, after hundreds of years, masonry may advance to that point. If the world stands long enough we may have a city as large as they had in old times. Babylon, five times the size of London. You go into the potteries of England and you find them making cups and vases after the style of the cups and vases exhumed from Pompeii. The world is not going back. Oh, no! but it is swinging in a circle and will come back to the styles of pottery known so long ago as the days of Pompeii. The world must keep on progressing until it makes the complete circuit. The curve is in the right direction. The curve will keep on until it becomes a circle.

What is true in the material universe is true in God's moral government and spiritual arrangement. That is the meaning of Ezekiel's wheel. All commentators agree in saying that the wheel means God's providence. But a wheel is of no use unless it turn, and if it turn it turns around, and if it turn around it moves in a circle. What then? Are we parts of a great iron machine whirled around whether we will or not, the victims of inexorable fate? No! So far from that I shall show you that we ourselves start the circle of good or bad actions, and that it will surely come around to us, unless by divine intervention it be hindered. Those bad or good actions may make the circuit of many years; but come back to us they will as certainly as that God sits on the circle of the earth. Jezebel, the worst woman of the Bible, slew Naboth because she wanted his vineyard. While the dogs were eating the body of Naboth, Elisha, the prophet, put down his compass and marked a circle from those dogs clear around to the dogs that should eat the body of Jezebel, the murderess. "Impossible," the people said, "that will never happen." Who is that being flung out of the palace window? Jezebel. A few hours after they came around, hoping to bury her. They find only the palms of her hands and the skull. The dogs that devoured Jezebel, and the dogs that devoured Naboth! Oh, what a swift, what an awful circuit.

But it is sometimes the case that this circle sweeps through a century, or through many centuries. The world started as a theocracy for government; that is, God was President and Emperor of the world. People got tired of a theocracy. They said: "We don't want God directly interfering with the affairs of the world; give us a monarchy." The world had a monarchy. From a monarchy it is going to have a limited monarchy. After awhile the limited monarchy will be given up, and the republican form of government will be everywhere dominant and recognized. Then the world will get tired of the republican form of government, and it will have an anarchy, which is no government at all. And then, all nations finding out that man is not capable of righteously governing man, will cry out again for a theocracy and say: "Let God come back and conduct the affairs of the world." Every step—monarchy, limited monarchy, republicanism, anarchy, only different steps between the first theocracy and the last theocracy, or segments of the great circle of the earth on which God sits.

But do not become impatient because you can not see the curve of events, and therefore conclude that God's government is going to break down. History tells us that in the making of the pyramids it took two thousand men two years to drag one great stone from the quarry and put it into the pyramids. Well, now, if men, short-lived can afford to work so slowly as that, can not God in the building of the eternities afford to wait? What though God should take ten thousand years to draw a circle? Shall we take our little watch, which we have to wind up every night lest it run down, and hold it up beside the clock of eternal ages? If, according to the Bible, 1,000 years are in God's sight as a day, then according to that calculation, the 6,000 years of the world's existence has been only to God as from Monday to Saturday.

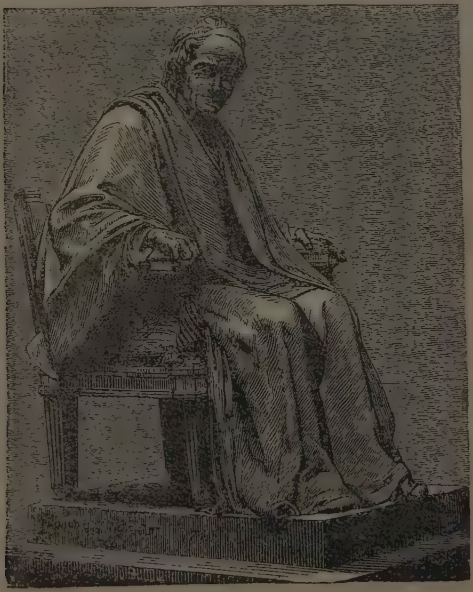
But it is often the case that the rebound is quicker, and the circle is sooner completed. You resolve that you will do what good you can. In one week you put a word of counsel in the heart of a Sabbath-school child. During that same week you give a letter of introduction to a young man struggling in business. During the same week you made an exhortation in a prayer meeting. It is all gone; you will never hear of it perhaps, you think. A few years after a man comes to you and says: "You don't know me, do you?" You say, "No, I don't remember ever to have seen you." "Why," he says, "I was in the Sabbath-school class of which you were the teacher. One Sunday you invited me to Christ. I accepted the offer. You see that church with two towers yonder?" "Yes," you say. He says, "That is where I preach." Or, "Do you see that Governor's house? That is where I live." One day a man comes to you and says, "Good morning." You look at him and say, "Why, you have the advantage of me; I can not place you." He says, "Don't you remember, thirty years ago giving a letter of introduction to a young man—a letter of introduction to a prominent merchant?" "Yes, I do." He says, "I am the man. That was my first step toward a fortune; but I have retired from business now, and am giving my time to philanthropies and public interests. Come up to my country place and see me." Or a man comes to you and says, "I want to introduce myself to you. I went into a prayer-meeting some years ago. I sat back near the door. You arose to make an exhortation. That talk changed the course of my life, and if I ever get to heaven, I will owe my salvation to you." In only ten, twenty, or thirty years, the circle swept out and swept back again to your own grateful heart.

But sometimes it is a wider circle and does not return for a great while. I saw a bill of expenses for burning Latimer and Ridley. The bill of expenses says: One load of fir fagots, 3s 4d; cartage of four loads of wood, 2s; a post, 1s 4d; two chains, 3s 4d; two staples, 6d; four laborers, 2s 8d; total of 12s 6d. That was a cheap fire considering all the circumstances; but it kindled a light which shone all around the world and around the martyr spirit; and out from that burning rolled the circle, wider and wider, starting other circles, convoluting, overrunning, circumscribing, overarching all heaven.

But what is true of the good is just us true of the bad. You utter a slander against your neighbor. It has gone forth from your teeth. It will never come back, you think. You have done the man all the mischief you can. You rejoice to see him wince. You say, "Didn't I give it to him?" That word has gone out, that slanderous word, on its poisonous and blasted way. You think it will never do you any harm. But I am watching that word, and I see it beginning to curve, and it curves around, and it is aiming at your heart. You had better dodge it. You can not dodge it. It rolls into your bosom, and after it rolls in a word of an old book, which says: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

You maltreat an aged parent. You begrudge him the room in your house. You are impatient of his whimsicalities and garrulity. It makes you mad to hear him tell the same story twice. You give him food he can not masticate. You wish he was away. You wonder if he is going to live forever. He will be gone very soon. His steps are shorter and shorter. He is going to stop. But God has an account to settle with you on that subject. After awhile your eye will be dim and your gait will halt, and the sound of the grinding will be slow, and you will tell the same story twice, and your children will wonder if you are going to live forever, and wonder if you will never be taken away. They called you "father" once; now they call you "the old man." If you live a few years longer they will call you "the old chap." What are those rough words with which your children are accosting you! They are the echo of the very words you used in the ear of your old father forty years ago. What is that which you are trying to chew, but find it unmasticable, and your jaws ache as you surrender the attempt? Perhaps it may be the gristle which you gave to your father for his breakfast forty years ago. A gentleman passing along the street saw a son dragging his father into the street by the hair of his head. The gentleman, outraged at this brutal conduct, was about to punish the offender, when the old man arose and said: "Don't hurt him; its all right; forty years ago this morning I dragged out my father by the hair of his head." Other sins may be adjourned to the next world, but maltreatment of parents is punished in this.

The circle turns quickly, very quickly. Oh, what a stupendous thought that the good and the evil we start come back to us! Do you know that the judgment day will be only the point at which the circle joins—the good and the bad we have done coming back to us, unless divine intervention hinders—coming back to us, welcome of delight or curse of condemnation? Oh, I would like to see Paul, the invalid missionary, at the moment when his influence comes to full orb—his influence rolling out through Antioch, through Cyprus, through Lystra, through Corinth, through Athens, through Asia, through Europe, through America, through the first century, through five centuries, through twenty centuries, through all the succeeding centuries, through earth, through heaven, and, at last, the wave of influence having made full circuit, strikes his great soul! Oh, then I would like to see him! No one can tell the wide sweep of the circle of his influence, save the One who is seated on the circle of the earth. I should not want to see the counte-



VOLTAIRE.

nance of Voltaire when his influence comes to full orb. When the fatal hemorrhage seized him at eighty-three years of age his influence did not cease. The most brilliant man of his century, he had used all his faculties for assaulting Christianity; his bad influence widening through France, widening out through Germany, widening through all Europe, widening through America, widening through the years that have gone by since he died, widening through earth, widening through hell; until at last the accumulated influence of his bad life, in fiery surge of omnipotent wrath, will beat against his destroyed spirit, and at that moment it will be enough to make the black hair of eternal darkness turn white with horror. No one can tell how that bad man's influence girdled the earth, save the One who is seated on the circle of the earth—the Lord Almighty.

"Well, now," people say, "this in some respects is a very glad theory, and in others a very sad one; we would like to have all the good we have ever done come back to us, but the thought that all the sins we have ever committed will come back to us fills us with affright." My brother, I have to tell you God can break that circle and will do so at your call. I can bring twenty passages of scripture to prove that when God for Christ's sake forgives man, the sins of his past life never come back. The wheel may roll on and roll on, but you take your position behind the cross, and the wheel strikes the cross and it is shattered forever. The sins fly off from the circle into the perpendicular, falling at right angles with complete oblivion. Forgiven! forgiven! The meanest thing a man can do is, after some difficulty has been settled, to bring it up again; and God will not be so mean as that. God's memory is mighty enough to hold all the events of the ages, but there is one thing that is sure to slip his memory, one thing he is sure to forget, and that is pardoned transgression.

But let not the reader make the mistake of thinking that this doctrine of the circle stops with this life; it rolls on through heaven. You might quote in opposition to me what Saint John says about the city of Heaven. He says it "lieth four square." That does seem to militate against this idea, but you know there is many a square house that has a family circle facing each other and in a circle moving, and this is so in regard to heaven. Saint John says: "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders." And again he says: "There was a rainbow round about the throne." The two former instances a circle; the last either a circle or a semi-circle. The seats facing each other, the angels facing each other, the men facing each other. Heaven an amphitheater of glory. Circumference of patriarch and prophet and apostle. Circumference of Scotch covenanters and Theban legion and Albigenses. Circumference of the good of all ages. Periphery of splendor unimagined and indescribable.

But every circumference must have a center, and what is the center of this heavenly circumference? Christ. His all the glory, his all the praise, his all the crowns. All heaven wreathed into a garland round about him. Take off the imperial sandal from his foot, and behold the scar of the spike. Lift the coronet of dominion from his brow, and see where was the lacerations of the briars. Come closer, all heaven. Narrow the circle around his great heart O Christ, the Saviour. O Christ, the man! O Christ, the God! Keep thy throne forever, seated on the circle of the earth, seated on the circle of the heaven!

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is shifting sand.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"DISADVANTAGES."

A great multitude of people are under seeming disadvantages, and I will in the swarthiest Anglo-Saxon that I can manage, treat their cases; not as a nurse counts out eight or ten drops of a prescription, and stirs them in a half glass of water, but as when a man has by mistake taken a large amount of strychnine, or Paris green, or belladonna, and the patient is walked rapidly round the room, and shaken up, and pounded until he gets wide awake. Many of you have taken a large draught of the poison of discouragement, and I come out by the order of the Divine Physician to rouse you out of that lethargy.

Many people are under the disadvantage of an unfortunate name, given them by parents who thought they were doing a good thing. Sometimes at the baptism of children, while I have held up one hand in prayer, I have held up the other hand in amazement that parents should have weighted the babe with such a dissonant and repulsive nomenclature. I have not so much wondered that some children should cry out at the christening font as that others with such smiling face should take a title that will be the burden of their lifetime. It is outrageous to afflict children with an undesirable name because it happened to be possessed by a parent or a rich uncle from whom favors are expected, or some prominent man of the day who may end his life in disgrace. It is no excuse, because they are Scripture names, to call a child Jehoiakim, or Tiglath-Pileser. I baptised one by the name Bethsheba. Why, under the circumambient heaven, any parent should want to give a child the name of that loose and infamous creature of Scripture times I can not imagine. I have often felt at the baptismal altar, when names were announced to me, like saying, as did Rev. Dr. Richards, of Morristown, N. J., when a child was handed him for sprinkling, and the name given: "Hadn't you better call it something else?"

Impose not upon that babe a name suggestive of flippancy or meanness. There is no excuse for such assault and battery on the cradle when our language is opulent with names musical in sound and suggestive in meaning, such as John, meaning "the gracious gift of God;" or Henry, meaning "the chief of a household;" or Alfred, meaning "good counsellor;" or Joshua, meaning "God, our salvation;" or Nicholas, meaning "victory of the people;" or Ambrose, meaning "immortal;" or Andrew, meaning "manly;" or Esther, meaning "a star;" or Abigail, meaning "my father's joy;" or Anna, meaning "grace;" or Victoria, meaning "victory;" or Rosalie, meaning "beautiful as a rose;" or Margaret, meaning "a pearl;" or Ida, meaning "god-like;" or Clara, meaning "illustrious;" or Amelia, meaning "busy;" or Bertha, meaning "beautiful," and hundreds of other names just as good, that are a help rather than a hindrance. But sometimes the great hindrance in life is not in the given name, but in the family name. While Legislatures are willing to lift such incubus, there are families that keep a name which mortgages all the generations with a great disadvantage. You say: "I wonder if he is any relation to so and so." Mentioning some family celebrated for crime or deception. It is a wonder to me that in all such families some spirited young man does not rise, saying to his brothers and sisters: "If you want to keep this nuisance or scandalization of a name, I will keep it no longer than until by quickest course of law I can slough off this gangrene." When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United

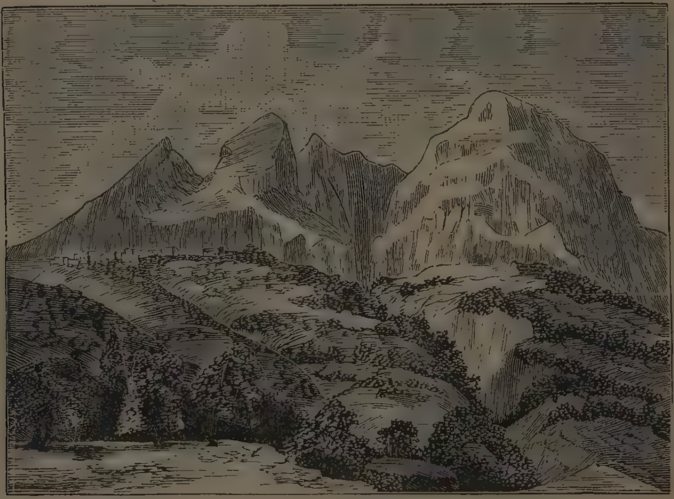
States met in 1876, two estimable men of the sweetest disposition stopped at the same house, and one had the misnomer of being Mr. Sour, and the other had the misnomer of being Mr. Pickle. And your city directory has hundreds of names the mere pronunciation of which has been a lifelong obstacle. If you have started life under a name which, either through ridiculous orthography or vicious suggestion, has been an incumbrance, resolve that the next generation shall not be so weighted. It is not bemeaning to change a name. Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Apostle. Hadassah, "the myrtle," became Esther, "the star." We have in America, and I suppose it is so in all countries, names which ought to be abolished, and can be, and will be abolished for the reason that they are a libel and a slander. But if for any reason you are submerged either by a given name or by a family name that you must bear, God will help you to overcome the outrage by a life consecrated to the good and useful. You may erase the curse from the name. You may somewhat change the significance. If once it stood for meanness, you can make it stand for generosity. If once it stood for pride, you can make it stand for humility. If it once stood for fraud, you can make it stand for honesty. If once it stood for wickedness, you can make it stand for purity. There have been multitudes of instances where men and women have magnificently conquered the disasters of the name inflicted upon them.

Many people labor under the misfortune of incomplete physical equipment. We are by our Creator so economically built that we cannot afford the obliteration of any physical faculty. We want our two eyes, our two ears, our two hands, our two feet, our eight fingers and two thumbs. Yet what multitudes of people have but one eye or but one foot. The ordinary casualties of life have been quadrupled, quintupled, sextupled—aye, centupled, in our time by the civil war, and at the North and South a great multitude that no man can number are fighting the battle of life with half, or less than half, the needed physical armament. I do not wonder at the pathos of a soldier during the war, who, when told that he must have his hand amputated, said: "Doctor, can't you save it?" And when told that it was impossible, said, with tears rolling down his cheeks: "Well, then, good-by, old hand; I hate to part with you. You have done me good service for many years, but it seems you must go. Good-by." A celebrated surgeon told me of a scene in the clinical department of a hospital, when a poor man with a wounded leg was brought in before the students to be operated on. The surgeon was pointing out this and that to the students, and handling the wounded leg, and was about to proceed to amputation, when the poor man leaped from the table and hobbled to the door, and said: "Gentlemen, I am sorry to disappoint you, but, by the help of God, I will die with my leg on." What a terrific loss is the loss of our physical faculties! The way the battle of Crecy was decided against the French was by the Welshmen killing the French horses, and that brought their riders to the ground. And when you cripple this body, which is merely the animal on which the soul rides, you may sometimes defeat the soul. Yet, how many suffer from this physical taking off! Good cheer, my brother! God will make it up to you somehow. The grace, the sympathy of God will be more to you than anything you have lost. If God allows part of your resources to be cut off in one place, he will add it on somewhere else. As Augustus, the Emperor, took off a day from February, making it the shortest month in the year, and added it to August, the month named after himself, so advantages taken from one part of your nature will be added on to another.

It is amazing how much of the world's work has been done by men of subtracted physical organization. S. S. Preston, the great orator of the Southwest, went limping all his life, but there was no foot put down upon any platform of his day that resounded so far as his club foot. Beethoven was so deaf that he could not hear the crash of the orchestra rendering his oratorios. Thomas Carlyle, the dyspeptic martyr, was given the commission to drive cant out of the world's literature. Rev. Thomas Stockton, of Philadelphia, with one lung raised his audience nearer heaven than most ministers can raise them with two lungs. In the banks, the insurance companies, the commercial establishments, the reformatory associations, the churches, there are tens of thousands of men and women to-day doubled up of rheumatisms or subject to neuralgias, or with only fragments of limbs, the rest of which they left at Chattanooga, or South Mountain, or the Wilderness, and they are worth more to the world, and more to the church, and more to God than those of us who have never so much as had a finger joint stiffened by a felon. Put to full use all the faculties that remain, and charge on all opposing circumstances with the determination of John of Bohemia, who was totally blind, and yet at a battle cried out: "I pray and beseech you to lead me so far into the fight that I may strike one good blow with this sword of mine." Do not think so much of what faculties you have lost as of what faculties remain. You have enough left to make yourself felt in three worlds, while you help the earth, and balk hell, and win heaven. Arise from your discouragements, oh men and women of depleted or crippled physical faculties, and see what, by the special help of God, you can accomplish.

The skilled horsemen stood around Bucephalus, unable to mount or manage him, so wild was the steed. But Alexander noticed that the sight of his own shadow seemed to disturb the horse. So Alexander clutched him by the bridle and turned his head away from the shadow and toward the sun, and the horse's agitation was gone, and Alexander mounted him and rode off, to the astonishment of all who stood by. And what you people need is to have your sight turned away from the shadows of your earthly lot, over which you have so long pondered, and your head turned toward the sun—the glorious sun of gospel consolation and Christian hope and spiritual triumph. And then remember that all physical disadvantages will after awhile vanish. Let those who have been rheumatismed out of a foot, or cataracted out of an eye, or, by the perpetual roar of our cities, thundered out of an ear, look forward to the day when this old tenement house of flesh will come down and a better one shall be builded. The resurrection morning will provide you with a better outfit. Either the unstrung, worn-out, blunted and crippled organs will be so reconstructed that you will not know them, or an entire new set of eyes, and ears, and feet will be given you. Just what it means by corruption putting on incorruption we do not know, save that it will be glory ineffable; no limping in heaven, no straining of the eyesight to see things a little way off; no putting of the hand behind the ear to double the capacity of the tympanum; but faculties perfect, all the keys of the instrument attuned for the sweep of the fingers of ecstasy. But until that day of resumption comes let us bear each other's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Another form of disadvantage under which many labor is lack of early education. There will be no excuse for ignorance in the next generation. Free schools and illimitable opportunity of education will make ignorance a crime. I believe in compulsory education, and those persons who neglect to put their children under educational advantages have but one right left, and that is the penitentiary. But there are multitudes of men and women in middle life who have had no opportunity. Free schools had not yet been established, and vast multitudes had little or no school at all. They feel it when, as Christian men they come to speak or pray in religious assemblies or public occasions, patriotic or political or educational. They are silent, because they do not feel competent. They owe nothing to English grammar, or geography or belles-lettres. They would not know a participle from a pronoun if they met it many times a day. Many of the most successful merchants of America, and men in high political places, cannot write an accurate letter on any theme. They are completely dependent upon clerks and deputies and stenographers to make things right. I knew a literary man who, in other years, in Washington, made his fortune by writing speeches for Congressmen, or fixing them up for the *Congressional Record*, after they were delivered. The millionaire illiteracy of this country is beyond measurement. Now suppose a man finds himself in mid-life without education, what is he to do? Do the best he can. The most effective layman in a former pastoral charge that I ever heard speak on religious themes could, within five minutes of exhortation, break all the laws of English grammar, and if he left any law unfractured he would complete the work of lingual devastation in the prayer with which he followed it. But I would rather have him pray for me, if I were sick or in trouble, than any Christian man I know of, and in that church all the people preferred him in exhortation and prayer to all others. Why? Because he was so thoroughly pious and had such power with God he was irresistible; and, as he went on in his prayer, sinners repented and saints shouted for joy, and the bereaved seemed to get back their dead in celestial companionship. And when he had stopped praying, and as soon as I could wipe out of my eyes enough tears to see the closing hymn, I ended the meeting fearful that some long-winded prayer-meeting bore would pull us down from the seventh heaven. Not a word have I to say against accuracy of speech, or fine elocution, or high mental culture. Get all these you can. But I do say to those who were brought up in the day of poor school-houses and ignorant school-masters, and no opportunity, you may have so much of good in your soul, and so much of heaven in your every-day life that you will be mightier for good than any who went through the curriculum of Harvard, or Yale, or Oxford, yet never graduated in the school of Christ. When you get up to the gate of heaven no one will ask you whether you can parse the first chapter of Genesis, but whether you have learned the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom; nor whether you know how to square the circle, but whether you have lived a square life in a round world. Mount Zion is higher than Mount Parnassus.



VIEW OF DELPHI AND MT. PARNASSUS.

But what other multitudes there are under other disadvantages. Here is the Christian woman whose husband thinks religion a sham, and while the wife prays the children one way the husband swears them another. Or here is a Christian man who is trying to do his best for God and the Church, and his wife holds him back and says on the way home from prayer-meeting, where he gave testimony for

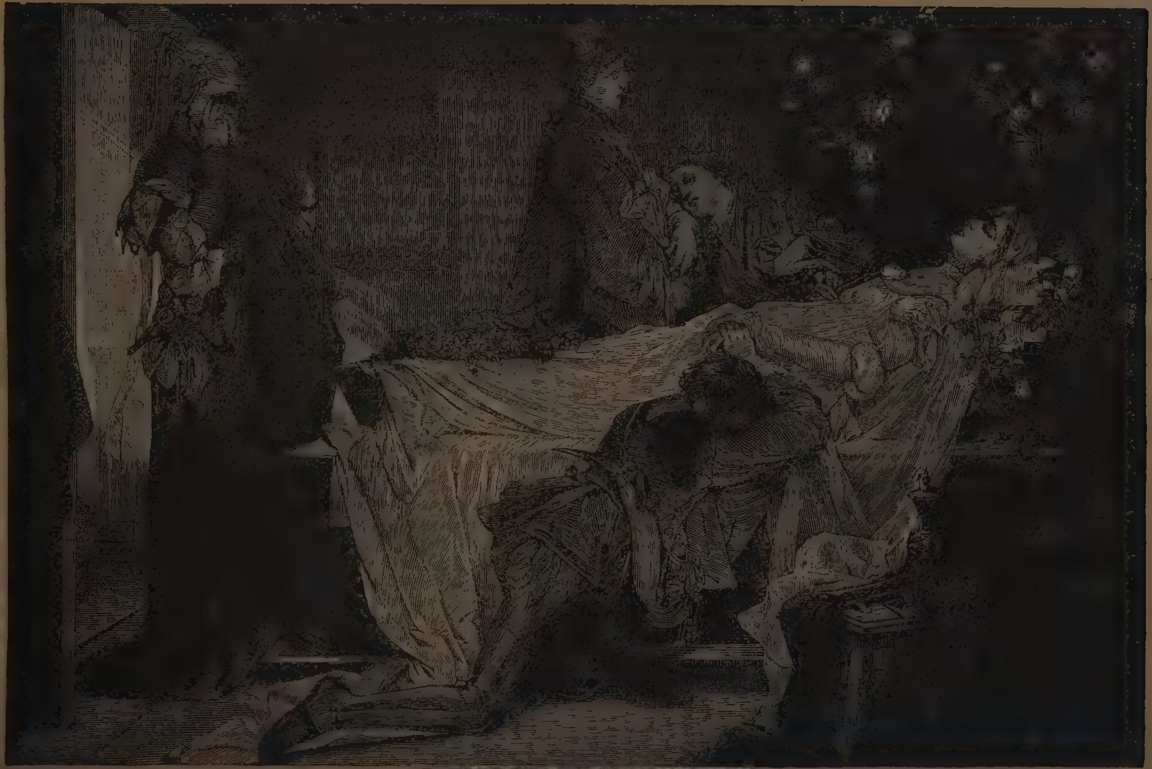
Christ: "What a fool you made of yourself! I hope hereafter you will keep still." And when he would be benevolent and give fifty dollars, she criticises him for not giving fifty cents. I must do justice, and publicly thank God that I never proposed at home to give anything for any cause of humanity or religion but the other partner in the domestic firm approved it. And when it seemed beyond my ability and faith in God was necessary, she had three-fourths of the faith. But I know men who, when they contribute to charitable objects, are afraid that the wife shall find it out. What a withering curse such a wife must be to a good man! Then there are others under the great disadvantage of poverty. Who ought to get things cheapest? You say those who have little means. But they pay more. You buy coal by the ton, they buy it by the bucket. You buy flour by the barrel, they buy it by the pound. You get apparel cheap because you pay cash. They pay dear because they have to get trusted. And the Bible was right when it said: "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." Then there are those who made a mistake in early life, and that overshadows all their days. "Do you not know that that man was once in prison?" is whispered. Or, "Do you know that that man once attempted suicide?" Or, "Do you know that that man once absconded?" Or, "Do you know that that man was once discharged for dishonesty?" Perhaps there was only one wrong deed in the man's life, and that one act haunts the subsequent half-century of his existence.

Others have unfortunate predominance of some mental faculty, and their rashness throws them into wild enterprises, or their trepidation makes them decline great opportunity, or there is a vein of melancholy in their disposition that defeats them, or they have an endowment of over-mirth that causes the impression of insincerity. Others have a mighty obstacle in their personal appearance, for which they are not responsible. They forget that God fashioned their features and their complexion, and their stature, the size of their nose and mouth, and hands and feet, and gave them the gait and the general appearance; and they forget that much of the world's best work, and the church's best work, has been done by homely peeple; and that Paul the Apostle is said to have been hump-backed, and his eyesight weakened by ophthalmia, while many of the finest in appearance have passed their time before flattering-looking glasses, or in studying killing attitudes, and in displaying the richness of wardrobes—not one ribbon, or vest, or sack, or glove, or button, or shoestring of which they have had brains enough to earn for themselves. Others had wrong proclivities from the start. They were born wrong, and that sticks to one even after he is born again. They have a natural crankiness that is two hundred and seventy-five years old. It came over with their great-grandfathers from Scotland, or Wales, or France. It was born on the banks of the Thames, or the Clyde, or the Tiber, or the Rhine, and has survived all the plagues and epidemics of many generations, and is living to-day on the banks of the Hudson, or the Androscoggin, or the Savannah, or the La Plata. And when a man tries to stop this evil ancestral proclivity he is like a man on a rock in the rapids of Niagara holding on with a grip from which the swift currents are trying to sweep him into the abyss beyond.

Oh, this world is an over-burdened world, an overworked world! It is an awfully tired world. It is a dreadfully unfortunate world. Scientists are trying to find out the cause of these earthquakes in all lands, cisatlantic and transatlantic. Some say this and some say that. I have taken the diagnosis of what is the matter with the earth. It has so many burdens on it and so many fires within it, it has a fit. It can not stand such a circumference and such a diameter. Some new Cotopaxi or Stromboli or Vesuvius will open, and then all will be at peace for the natural world.

But what about the moral woes of the world, that have rocked all nations, and for six thousand years science proposes nothing but knowledge, and many people that know the most are the most uncomforted. In the way of practical relief for all disadvantages and all woes, the only voice that is worth listening to on this subject is the voice of Christianity, which is the voice of Almighty God. Whether I have mentioned the particular disadvantage under which you labor or not, I distinctly declare, in the name of my God, that there is a way out and a way up for all of you. You can not be any worse off than that Christian young woman who was in the Pemberton mills when they fell some years ago, and from under the fallen timbers she was heard singing, I am going home to die no more.

Take good courage from that Bible, all of whose promises are for those in bad predicament. There are better-days for you, either on earth or in heaven. I put my hand under your chin and lift your face into the light of the coming dawn. Have God on your side, and then you have for reserve troops all the armies of heaven, the smallest company of which is twenty thousand chariots, and the smallest battalion one hundred and forty-four thousand, the lightnings of heaven their drawn swords. An ancient warrior saw an overpowering host come down upon his small company of armed men, and, mounting his horse with a handful of sand, he threw it in the air, crying: "Let their faces be covered with confusion!" And both armies heard his voice, and history says it seemed as though the dust thrown in the air had become so many angels of supernatural deliverance, and the weak overcome the mighty, and the immense host fell back, and the small number marched on. Have faith in God, and though all the allied forces of discouragement seem to come against you in battle array, and their laugh of defiance and contempt resounds through all the valleys and mountains, you might by faith in God and importunate prayer pick up a handful of the very dust of your humiliation and throw it into the air, and it shall become angels of victory over all the armies of earth and hell. The voices of your adversaries, human and satanic, shall be covered with confusion, while you shall be not only conqueror, but more than conqueror, through that grace which has so often made the fallen helmet of an overthrown antagonist the footstool of a Christian victory.



DEATH OF THE WIDOW'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

RETRIBUTION OF HARD THOUGHTS.

In the greatest sermon ever preached—a sermon about fifteen minutes long according to the ordinary rate of speech—a sermon on the Mount of Olives, the preacher sitting while he spoke, according to the ancient mode of oratory, the people were given to understand that the same yard-stick that they employed upon others would be employed upon themselves. Measure others by a harsh rule, and you will be measured by a harsh rule. Measure others by a charitable rule and you will be measured by a charitable rule. Give no mercy to others, and no mercy will be given to you. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." There is a great deal of unfairness in the criticism of human conduct. It was to smite that unfairness that Christ uttered these words and I wish to re-echo the divine sentiment. In estimating the misbehavior of others we must take into consideration the pressure of circumstances. It is never right to do wrong, but there are degrees of culpability. When men misbehave or commit some atrocious wickedness we are disposed indiscriminately to tumble them all over the bank of condemnation. Suffer they ought and suffer they must, but in difference of degree.

In the first place, in estimating the misdoing of others, we must take into calculation the hereditary tendency. There is such a thing as good blood, and there is such a thing as bad blood. There are families that have had a moral twist in them for one hundred years back. They have not been careful to keep the family record in that regard. There have been escapades and maraudings, and scoundrelisms and moral deficits all the way back, whether you call it kleptomania, or pyromania, or dipsomania, or whether it be in a milder form and amount to no mania at all. The strong probability is that the present criminal started life with nerve, muscle and bone contaminated. As some start life with a natural tendency to nobility and generosity, and kindness and truthfulness, there are others who start life with just the opposite tendency, and they are born liars, or born malcontents, or born outlaws, or born swindlers. There is in England a school that is called the Princess Mary school. All the children in that school are the children of convicts. The school is supported by high patronage. I had the pleasure of being present at one of their anniversaries, in 1879, presided over by the Earl of Kintore. By a wise law in England, after parents have committed a certain number of crimes, and thereby shown themselves incompetent rightly to bring up their children, the little ones are taken from under pernicious influences and put in reformatory schools, where all gracious and kindly influences shall be brought upon them. Of course the experiment is young, and it has got to be demonstrated how large a percentage of the children of convicts may be brought up to respectability and usefulness. But we all know that it is more difficult for children of bad parentage to do right than for children of good parentage.

In this country we are taught by the Declaration of American Independence, that all people are born equal. There never was a greater misrepresentation put in one sentence than in that sentence which implies that we are all born equal. You may as well say that flowers are born equal or trees are born equal, or animals are born equal. Why does one horse cost one hundred dollars and another horse cost five thousand dollars? Why does one sheep cost ten dollars and another sheep cost five hundred dollars? Difference in blood. We are wise enough to recognize the difference of blood in horses, in cattle, in sheep, but we are not wise enough to make allowance for the difference in the human blood. Now I demand by the law of eternal fairness that you be more lenient in your criticism of those who were born wrong, in whose ancestral line there was a hangman's knot, or who came from a tree the fruit of which for centuries has been gnarled and worm-eaten. Dr. Harris, a reformer, gave some marvelous statistics in his story of what he called "Margaret, the Mother of Criminals." Ninety years ago she lived in a village in upper New York State. She was not only poor, but she was vicious. She was not well provided for. There were no almshouses there. The public, however, somewhat looked after her, but chiefly scoffed at her, and derided her, and pushed her farther down in her crimes. That was ninety years ago. There have been six hundred and twenty-three persons in that ancestral line, two hundred of them criminals. In one branch of that family there were twenty, and nine of them have been in State Prison, and nearly all of the others have turned out badly. It is estimated that that family cost the county and State one hundred thousand dollars, to say nothing of the property they destroyed. Are you not willing, as sensible people, to acknowledge that it is a fearful disaster to be born in such an ancestral line? Does it not make a great difference whether one descends from Margaret, the mother of criminals, or from some mother in Israel? whether you are the son of Ahab, or the son of Joshua? It is a very different thing to swim with the current, from what it is to swim against the current. If a man find himself in an ancestral current where is good blood flowing smoothly from generation to generation, it is not a very great credit to him if he turn out good and honest, and pure and noble. He could hardly help it. But suppose he is born in an ancestral line, in an hereditary line, where the influences have been bad, and there has been a coming down over moral declivity, if the man surrender to the influences he will go down under the overmastering gravitation unless some supernatural aid be afforded him. Now, such a person deserves not your excoriation, but your pity. Do not sit with the lip curled in scorn, and with an assumed air of angelic innocence looking down upon such moral precipitation. You had better get down on your knees and first pray Almighty God for their rescue, and next thank the Lord that you have not been thrown under the wheels of that juggernaut. In Great Britain and in the United States, in every generation, there are tens of thousands of persons who are fully developed criminals and incarcerated. I say in every generation. Then, I suppose there are tens of thousands of persons not found out in their criminality. In addition to these there are tens of thousands of persons, who not positively becoming criminals, nevertheless have a criminal tendency. Any one of all those thousands by the grace of God may become Christian, and resist the ancestral influence, and open a new chapter of behavior; but the vast majority of them will not, and it becomes all men, professional, unprofessional, ministers of religion, judges of courts, philanthropists and Christian workers, to recognize the fact that there are these Atlantic and Pacific surges of hereditary evil rolling on through the centuries.

A man can resist this tendency, just as in the ancestral line mentioned in the first chapter of Matthew. You see in the same line in which there was a wicked Rehoboam and a desperate Manasses, there afterward came a pious Joseph and a glorious Christ. But, my readers, you must recognize the fact these influences go on from generation to generation. I am glad to know, however, that a river, which has produced nothing but miasma for one hundred miles, may after awhile turn the wheels of factories and help support industrious and virtuous populations; and there are family lines which were poisoned that are a benediction now. At the last day it will be found out that there are men who have gone clear over into all forms of iniquity and plunged into other abandonment, who, before they yielded to the first temptation, resisted more evil than many a man who has been moral and upright all his life. But supposing now, that in this age when there are so many good people, that I select the very best man in it. I do not mean the man who would style himself the best, for probably he is a hypocrite; but I mean the man who before God is really the best. I will take you out from your Christian surroundings. I will take you back to boyhood. I will put you in a depraved home. I will put you in a cradle of iniquity. Who is that bending over that cradle? An intoxicated mother. Who is that swearing in the next room? Your father. The neighbors come in to talk, and their jokes are unclean. There is not in the house a Bible or moral treatise, but only a few scraps of an old pictorial. After awhile you are old enough to get out of the cradle, and you are struck across the head for naughtiness, but never in any kindly manner reprimanded. After awhile you are old enough to go abroad, and you are sent out with a basket to steal. If you come home without any spoil you are whipped until the blood comes. At fifteen years of age you go out to fight your own battles in this world, which seems to care no more for you than the dog that died of a fit under the fence. You are kicked and cuffed and buffeted. Some day, rallying your courage, you resent some wrong. A man says: "Who are you? I know who you are. Your father had free lodgings in prison. Your mother was up for drunkenness at the Criminal Court. Get out of my way, you low-lived wretch!" My brother, suppose that had been the history of your advent, and the history of your earlier surroundings, would you have been the Christian man you are to-day? I tell you nay. You would have been a vagabond, an outlaw, a murderer on the scaffold atoning for your crime. All these considerations ought to make us merciful in our dealings with the wandering and the lost.

In our estimate of the misdoings of people who have fallen from high respectability and usefulness, we must take into consideration the conjunction of circumstances. In nine cases out of ten a man who goes astray does not intend any positive wrong. He has trust funds. He risks a part of these funds in investment. He says: "Now, if I should lose that investment I have my own property, five times as much, and if this investment should go wrong I could easily make it up; I could five times make it up." With that wrong reasoning he goes on and makes the investment, and it does not turn out quite so well as he expected, and he makes another investment, and strange to say, at the time all his other affairs get entangled, and all his other resources fail, and his hands are tied. Now he wants to extricate himself. He goes a little farther on in the wrong investment. He takes a plunge further ahead, for he wants to save his wife and children, he wants his home, he wants to save his membership in the church. He takes one more plunge and all is lost. Some morning at ten o'clock the bank door is not opened, and there is a card on the door signed by an officer of the bank, indicating there is trouble, and the name of the defaulter or defrauder heads the newspaper column. Under these conditions hundreds of men say, "Good for him; hundreds of other men say: "I'm glad he's found out at last;" hundreds of other men say: "Just as I told you;" hundreds of other men say: "We couldn't possibly have been tempted to do that—no conjunction of circumstances could ever have overthrown me;" and there is a superabundance of indignation, but no pity. The heavens full of lightning, but not one drop of dew. If God treated us as society treats that man we would all have been in hell long ago! Wait for the alleviating circumstances. Perhaps he may have been the dupe of others. Before you let all the hounds out from their kennel to maul and tear that man, find out if he has not been brought up in a commercial establishment where there was a wrong system of ethics taught; find out whether that man has not an extravagant wife, who is not satisfied with his honest earnings, and in the temptation to please her he has gone into that ruin into which enough men have fallen, and by the same temptation, to make a procession of many miles. Perhaps some sudden sickness may have touched his brain and his judgment may be unbalanced. He is wrong; he is awfully wrong, and he must be condemned, but there may be mitigating circumstances. Perhaps under the same temptation you might have fallen. The reason some men do not steal two hundred thousand dollars is because they do not get a chance! Have righteous indignation you must about that man's conduct, but temper it with mercy. But you say: "I am sorry that the innocent should suffer." Yes, I am too—sorry for the widows and orphans who lost their all by that defalcation. I am sorry also for the business men, the honest business men, who have had their affairs all crippled by that defalcation. I am sorry for that venerable bank president to whom the credit of that bank was a matter of pride. Yes, I am sorry also for that man who brought all the distress; sorry that he sacrificed body, mind, soul, reputation, heaven, and went into the blackness of darkness forever."

You defiantly say: "I could not be tempted in that way." Perhaps you may be tested after awhile. God has a very good memory, and he sometimes seems to say: "This man feels so strong in his innate power and goodness he shall be tested; he is so full of bitter invective against that unfortunate it shall be shown now whether he has the power to stand." Fifteen years go by. The wheel of fortune turns several times, and you are in a crisis that you never could have anticipated. Now, all the powers of darkness come around, and they chuckle, and they chatter, and they say: "Aha! here is the old fellow who was so proud of his integrity, and who bragged he couldn't be overthrown by temptation, and was so uproarious in his demonstrations of indignation at the defalcation fifteen years ago. Let us see." God lets the man go. God, who had kept that man under His protecting care, let the man go, and try for himself the majesty of his integrity. God letting the man go, the powers of darkness pounce upon him. I see you some day in your office in great excitement. One of two things you can do. Be honest, and be pauperized, and have your children brought home from school, your family dethroned in social influence. The other thing is, you can step a little aside from that which is right, you can only just go half an inch out of the proper path, you can only take a little risk, and then you have all your finances fair and right. You have a large property. You can leave a fortune for your children, and endow a college, and build a public library in your native town. You halt and wait, and halt and wait until your lips get white. You decide to risk it. Only a few strokes of the pen now. But, oh, how your hand trembles, how dreadfully it trembles! The die is cast. By the strangest and most awful conjunction of circumstances any one could have imagined, you are prostrated. Bankruptcy, commercial annihilation, exposure, crime. Good men mourn and devils hold carnival, and you see your own name at the head of the newspaper column in a whole congress of exclamation points; and while you are reading the anathema in the reportorial and editorial paragraph, it occurs to you how much this story is like that of the defalcation of fifteen years ago, and a clap of thunder shakes the window-sill, saying: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again!"

You look in another direction. There is nothing like an ebullition of temper to put a man to disadvantage. You, a man with calm pulses and a fine digestion and perfect health, can not understand how anybody should be capsized in temper by an infinitesimal annoyance. You say: "I couldn't be unbalanced in that way." Perhaps you smile at a provocation that makes another man swear. You pride yourself on your imperturbability. You say with your manner, though you have too much good taste to say it with your words: "I have a great deal more sense than that man has; I have a great deal more equipoise of temper than that man has; I never could make such a puerile exhibition of myself as that man has made." You do not realize that that man was born with a keen nervous organization, that for forty years he has been under a depleting process, that sickness and trouble have been helping undo what was left of original healthfulness, that much of his time it has been with him like filing saws, that his nerves have come to be merely a tangle of disorders, and that he is the most pitiable object on earth who, though he is very sick, does not look sick, and nobody sympathizes. Let me see. Did you not say that you could not be tempted to an ebullition of temper? Some September you come home from your summer watering-place and you have inside, away back in your liver or spleen, what we call in our day malaria, but what the old folks called chills and fever. You take quinine until your ears are first buzzing beehives and then roaring Niagaras. You take roots and herbs, you take everything. You get well. But the next day you feel uncomfortable, and you yawn, and you stretch, and you shiver, and you consume, and you suffer. Vexed more than you can tell, you can not sleep, and you can not eat, you can not bear to see anything that looks happy, you go out to kick the cat that is asleep in the sun. Your children's mirth was once music to you; now it is deafening. You say: "Boys, stop that racket!" You turn back from June to March. In the family and in the neighborhood your popularity is ninety-five per cent off. The world says: "What is the matter with that disagreeable man? What a woe-begone countenance! I can't bear the sight of him." You have got your pay at last—got your pay. You feel just as the man felt, that man for whom you had no mercy: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

In the study of society I have come to this conclusion, that the most of the people want to be good, but they do not exactly know how to make it out. They make enough good resolutions to lift them into angelhood. The vast majority of people who fall are victims of circumstances; they are captured by ambuscade. If their temptations should come out in a regiment and fight them in a fair field, they would go out in the strength and the triumph of David against Goliath. But they do not see the giant, and they do not see the regiment. Suppose temptation should come up to a man and say: "Here is alcohol; take three tablespoonfuls of it a day until you get dependent upon it; then after that take half of a glass three times a day until you get dependent upon that amount, then go on increasing the amount until you are saturated from morning until night and from night until morning." Do you suppose any man would become a drunkard in that way? Oh, no! Temptation comes and says: "Take these bitters, take this nervine, take this aid to digestion, take this night-cap." The vast majority of men and women who are destroyed by opium and by rum first take them as medicines. In making up your dish of criticism in regard to them, take from the caster the cruet of sweet oil, and not the cruet of cayenne pepper. Be easy on them. Do you know how that physician, that lawyer, that journalist became the victim of dissipation? Why the physician was kept up night by night on professional duty. Life and death hovered in the balance. His nervous system was exhausted. There came a time of epidemic, and whole families were prostrated, and his nervous strength was gone. He was all worn out in the service of the public. Now he must brace himself up. Now he stimulates. The life of this mother, the life of this child, the life of this father, the life of this whole family must be saved, and of all these families must be saved, and he stimulates, and he does it again and again. You may criticize his judgment, but remember the process. It was not a selfish process by which he went down. It was magnificent generosity through which he fell. That attorney at the bar for weeks has been standing in a poorly-ventilated court-room, listening to the testimony and contesting in the dry technicalities of the law, and now the time has come for him to wind up, and he must plead for the life of his client, and his nervous system is all gone. If he fails in that speech his client perishes. If he have eloquence enough in that hour his client is saved. He stimulates. He must keep up. He says: "I must keep up." Having a large practice you see how he is enthralled. You may criticize his judgment, but remember the process. Do not be hard. That journalist has had exhausting midnight work. He has had to report speeches and orations that keep him up till a very late hour. He has gone with much exposure working up some case of crime in company with a detective. He sits down at midnight to write out his notes from a memorandum scrawled on a pad under unfavorable circumstances. His strength is gone. Fidelity to the public intelligence, fidelity to his own livelihood demand that he keep up. He must keep up. He stimulates. Again and again he does that, and he goes down. You may criticize his judgment in the matter, but have mercy. Remember the process. Do not be hard

This truth will come to fulfillment in some cases in this world. The huntsman in Farmsteen was shot by some unknown person. Twenty years after the son of the same huntsman was in the same forest, and he accidentally shot a man, and the man in dying said: "God is just; I shot your father just here twenty years ago." A bishop said to Louis XI. of France: "Make an iron cage for all those who do not think as we do—an iron cage in which the captive can neither lie down nor stand straight up." It was fashioned—

the awful instrument of punishment. After awhile the bishop offended Louis XI., and for fourteen years he was in that same cage, and could neither lie down nor stand up. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways.

Oh, my readers, let us be resolved to scold less and pray more. That which in the Bible is used as the symbol of all gracious influences is the dove, not the porcupine. We may so unskilfully manage the lifeboat that we shall run down those whom we want to rescue. The first preparation for Christian usefulness is warm-hearted common-sense, practical sympathy for those whom we want to save. What headway will we make in the judgment if in this world we have been hard on those who have gone astray? What headway will you and I make in the last great judgment, when we must have mercy or perish? The Bible says: "They shall have judgment without mercy that showed no mercy." I see the scribes of heaven looking up into the face of such a man, saying: "What! you plead for mercy! you whom in all your life never had any mercy on your fellows! Don't you remember how hard you were in your opinions of those who were astray? Don't you remember when you ought to have given a helping hand you employed a hard heel? Mercy! You must mis-speak yourself when you plead for mercy here. Mercy for others, but no mercy for you." "Look," say the scribes of heaven, "look at that inscription over the throne of judgment—the throne of God's judgment." See it coming out, letter by letter, word by word, sentence by sentence, until your startled vision reads it, and your remorseful spirit appropriates it: "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. Depart, ye cursed."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SPIRITUALISM.

We are surrounded by mystery. Before us, behind us, to the right of us, to the left of us, mystery. There is a vast realm unexplored, that science, I have no doubt, will yet map out. He who explores that realm will do the world more service than did ever a Columbus or an Amerigo Vespucci. There are so many things that can not be accounted for, so many sounds and appearances which defy acoustics and investigation, so many things approximating to the spectral, so many effects which do not seem to have a sufficient cause. The wall between the spiritual and the material is a very thin wall.

That there are communications between this world and the next world there can be no doubt, the spirits of our departed going from this world to that, and, according to the Bible, ministering spirits coming from that to this. I do not know but that some time there may be complete, and constant, and unmistakable lines of communication opened between this world and the next. To unlatch the door between the present state and the future state all the fingers of superstition have been busy. We have books entitled "Footfalls on the Boundaries of Other Worlds," "The Debatable Land Between this World and the Next," "Researches into the Phenomena of Spiritualism," and whole libraries of hocus-pocus, enough to deceive the very elect.

Modern Spiritualism proposes to open the door between this world and the next, and put us into communication with the dead. It has never yet offered one reasonable credential.

There is nothing in the intelligence or the character of the founders of Spiritualism to commend it. All the wonderful things performed by Spiritualism have been performed by sleight-of-hand and rank deception. Dr. Carpenter, Robert Houdin, Mr. Waite and others have exposed the fraud by dramatizing in the presence of audiences the very things that Spiritualism proposes to do or says it has done. In the New York *Independent* there is an account of a challenge given by a non-Spiritualist to a Spiritualist to meet him on the platform of Tremont Temple, Boston. The non-Spiritualist declared that he would by sleight-of-hand perform all the feats executed by the Spiritualist. They met in the presence of an audience. The Spiritualist went through his wonderful performances, and the other man by sleight-of-hand did the same things.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," is the test that Christ gave, and by that test I conclude that the tree of Spiritualism which yields bad fruit, and bad fruit continually, is one of the worst trees in all the orchard of necromancy. The postoffice which it has established between the next world and this is another Star Route postoffice, kept up at vast expense without ever having delivered one letter from the other world to this.

Spiritualism is a very old doctrine. Do you want to know the origin and the history of that which has captured so many in all our towns and cities, a doctrine with which some of you are tinged? Spiritualism in America was born in 1847, in Hydesville, Wayne county, New York, where one night there was a rapping at the door of Michael Weekman, and a second rapping at the door, and a third rapping at the door, and every time the door was opened there was no one there. Proof positive that they were invisible knuckles that rapped at the door. In that same house there was a man who felt a cold hand pass over his forehead, and there was no arm attached to the hand. Proof positive it was spiritualistic influence. After a while, Mr. Fox with his family moved into that house, and then they had bangings at the door every night. One night Mr. Fox cried out: "Are you a spirit?" Two raps—answer in the affirmative. "Are you an injured spirit?" Two raps—answer in the affirmative. Then they knew right away that it was the spirit of a peddler who had been murdered in that house years before, and who had been robbed of his five hundred dollars. Whether the spirit of the peddler came back to collect his five hundred dollars or his bones I do not know. But from that time on there was a constant excitement around the premises, and the excitement spread all over the land. All these are matters of history. People said: "Well, now, we have a new religion." Ah! it is not a new religion.

In all ages there have been necromancers, those who consulted with the spirits of the departed—charmers who threw people into a mesmeric state, sorcerers who by eating poisonous herbs can see everything, hear everything, and tell everything, astrologers who found out a new dispensation of the stars, experts in palmistry who can tell by the lines in the palm of your hand your origin, your history and your destiny. From the cavern on Mount Parnassus it is said there came up an atmosphere that intoxicated the sheep and the goats that came near by, and under its influence the shepherds were lifted into exaltation so they could foretell future events and consult with familiar spirits. Long before the time of Christ the Brahmins had all the table rocking and the table quaking.

You want to know what God thinks of all these things. He says in one place, "I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers." He says in another place, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." And lest you should make too wide a margin between Spiritualism and witchcraft, he groups them together, and says: "There shall not be found among you any consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer, for all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." And then the still more remarkable passage, which says: "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people;" and a score of passages showing that God never speaks of these evils in any other way than with living thunders of indignation.

Spiritualism takes advantage of people when they are weak and morbid with trouble. We lose a friend. The house is dark, the world is dark, the future seems dark. If we had in our rebellion and in our weakness the power to marshal a host and recapture our loved one from the next world, we would marshal the host. Oh, how we long to speak with the dead! Spiritualism comes in at that moment, when we are all worn out, perhaps by six weeks' or two months' watching, all worn out body, mind, and soul, and says, "Now I will open the door, you shall hear the voices; take your place around the table; all be quiet now." Five minutes pass along; no response from the next world. Ten minutes, fifteen minutes, twenty minutes. Nervous system all the time more and more agitated. Thirty minutes; no response from the next world. Forty minutes pass, and the table begins to shiver. Then the medium sits down, his hand twitching, and the pen and the ink and the paper having been provided, he writes out the message from the next world.

What is remarkable is that these spirits, after being in the illumination of heaven, some of them for years, forget how to spell right. People who were excellent grammarians come back, and with their first sentence smash all the laws of English grammar! I received such a letter. I happened to know the man that signed it. It was a miserably spelled letter. I sent it back with the remark. "You just send word to those spirits they had better go to school and study orthography." It comes in time of weakness, and overthrows the soul. Now, just think of spirits enthroned in heaven coming down to crawl under a table, and break crockery, and ring the bell before supper is ready, and rattle the shutters on a gusty night. What consolation in such miserable stuff as compared with the consolation of our departed friends free from toil, and sin, and pain, and forever happy, and that we will join them, not in mysterious and half utterances, which make the hair stand on end, and make cold chills creep up and down the back, but in a reunion most blessed, and happy, and glorious.

Oh, I hate Spiritualism, because it takes advantage of people when they are weak, and worn out, and morbid under the bereavements and sorrows of this life. It is also an affair of the night. The Davenports, the Foxes, the Fowlers, and all the mediums prefer the night, or if it is in the daytime, a darkened room. Why? Because deception is more successful in the night. Some of the things done in Spiritualism are not frauds, but are to be ascribed to some occult law of nature which will after a while be demonstrated; but nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand of their feats are arrant and unmitigated humbug.

I suppose almost every one sometime has been touched by some hallucination. Indigestion from a late supper generally accounts for it. If you will only take in generous proportions at eleven o'clock at night, lobster salad and mince-pie and ice-cream and lemonade and a little cocoanut, you will be able to see fifty materialized spirits. All the mediums of the past did their work in the night. Witch of Endor held her seance in the night. Deeds of darkness. Away with this religion of spooks!

Spiritualism ruins the physical health. Look in upon an audience of Spiritualists. Cadaverous, pale, worn out, exhausted. Hands cold and clammy. Nothing prospers but long hair—soft marshes yielding rank grass. Something startling going through that room, clothed in white. Table fidgety as though to get its feet loose and dance. Voices sepulchral. Rappings mysterious. I never knew a confirmed Spiritualist who had a healthy nervous organization. It is the first stages of epilepsy or catalepsy. I have noticed that people who hear a great many rappings from the next world have not much strength to endure the hard raps of this.

What a sin it is to be trifling with your nervous system. Get your nervous system out of tune and the whole universe is out of tune as far as you are concerned. Better tamper with the chemist's retort that may smite you dead, or with engineer's steam boiler that may blow you to atoms, than trifle with your nerves. You can live without eyes, and with one lung and with no hands and no feet. Be happy as men have been happy in such misfortune; but alas! if your nervous system is gone.

Spiritualism is a marital and social curse. Deeds of darkness and orgies of obscenity have transpired under its wing. I cannot tell you the story. I will not pollute my tongue or your ears with the recital. Enough to know that the criminal courts have often been called to stop the criminality. How many families have been broken up throughout the United States! Women by the hundreds have by Spiritualism been pushed off into a life of profligacy. It employs all that phraseology about "spiritual affinities," and "affinital relation," and "spiritual matches," and the whole vocabulary of free love. It is at war with the marriage relation. I quote from one of their prominent papers where it says: "Marriage is the monster curse of civilization." The Spiritualist paper goes on to say: "Marriage controls education, is the fountain of selfishness, the cause of intemperance and debauchery, the source and aggravation of poverty, the prolific mother of disease and crime. The society we want is men and women living in freedom, sustaining themselves by their own industry, dealing with each other in equity.

respecting each other's sovereignty, and governed by their attractions."

If Spiritualism had full swing it would turn this world into a pandemonium of carnality. It is an unclean and an adulterous religion, and the sooner it goes down to the pit from which it came up, the better for earth and heaven. For the sake of man's honor and woman's purity, let it perish. I wish I could gather up all the raps it has ever heard from spirits blest or damned on its own head in one thundering rap of annihilation.

This belief in Spiritualism produces insanity. There is not an asylum from Bangor to San Francisco where there are not the torn and bleeding victims of Spiritualism. You go into an asylum and say: "What is the matter with this man?" The doctors will tell you again and again, "Spiritualism demented him." "What is the matter with this woman?" "Spiritualism demented her." They have been carried off into mental midnight—senators, judges of courts—and at one time they came near capturing a President of the United States. At Flushing, Long Island, there was a happy home. The father became infatuated with Spiritualism, forsook his home, took the fifteen thousand dollars, the only fifteen thousand dollars he had, surrendered them to a New York medium, three times attempted to take his own life, and then was sent to the State lunatic asylum. You put your hand in the hand of this influence and it will lead you down to darkness, eternal darkness, where Spiritualism holds an everlasting seance.

You remember the steamer Atlantic started from Europe for America. After it had been out long enough to get to the middle of the ocean, the machinery broke, and for days and weeks the steamer Atlantic tossed about in the waves. There were many friends of the passengers who said, "That vessel has gone down; it is a month since she was due; that vessel must have sunk." There were wives who went to spiritual mediums to learn the fate of that vessel. The spirits were gathered around the table and they said that vessel had gone to the bottom with all on board. Some of those women went to the insane asylum and passed the rest of their lives. But one day, off quarantine, a gun was heard. Flags went up on all the shipping, bells were rung, newsboys ran through the streets shouting: "Extra! The Atlantic safe!" The vessel came to wharf, and there was embracing of long-absent ones; but some of these men went up to the insane asylum to find their wives incarcerated by this foul cheat of hell, Spiritualism.

What did Judge Edmonds say in Broadway Tabernacle, New York, while making argument in behalf of Spiritualism, himself having been fully captured. What did Judge Edmonds say? He admitted this: "There is a fascination about consultation with the spirits of the dead that has a tendency to lead people off from their right judgment, and to instil into them a fanaticism that is revolting to the natural mind."

It not only ruins its disciples but it ruins its mediums. No sooner had the Gadarean swine on the banks of Galilee become spiritual mediums than they went down in an avalanche of pork to the consternation of all the herdsmen. Spiritualism bad for a man, bad for a woman, bad for a beast.

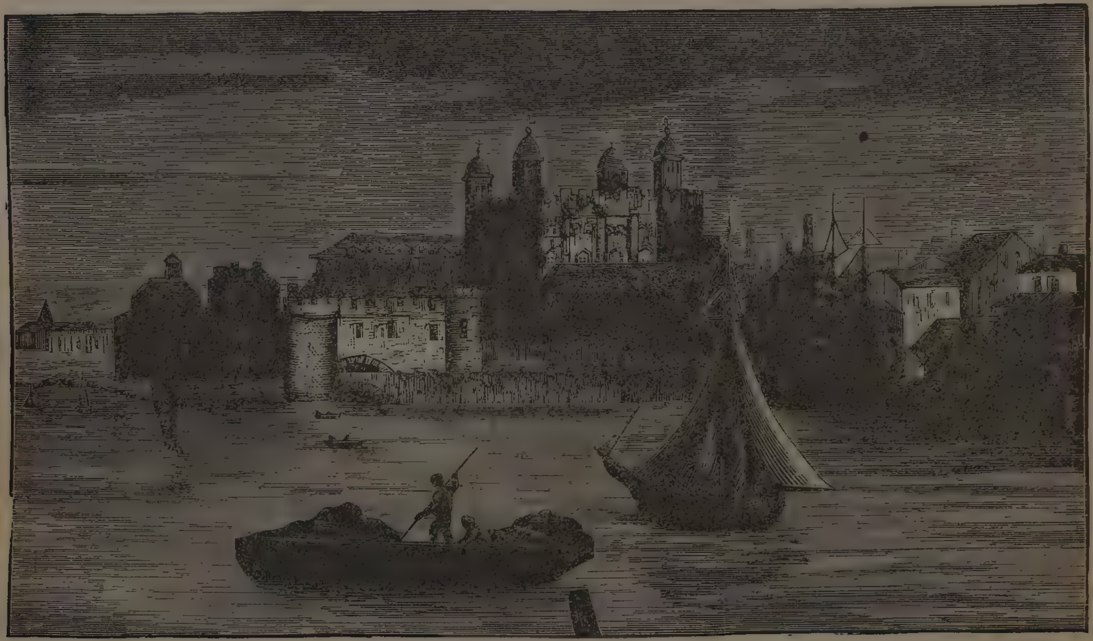
It ruins the soul. It first makes a man quarter of an infidel, then it makes him half an infidel, then it makes him a full infidel. The whole system is built on the insufficiency of the Bible as a revelation. If God is ever struck square in the face it is when men sit at a table, put their hands on the table and practically say: "Come, you spirits of the departed, and make revelation in regard to the future world which the Bible has not made. Come, father; come, mother, companion in life, my children, come, tell me something about that future world which the Bible is not able to tell me." Although the Bible says he that adds a word to it shall be found a liar, men are all the time getting these revelations, or trying to get them from the next world. You will either, my reader, have to give up the Bible or give up Spiritualism. No one ever for a very great length of time kept both of them.

CHAPTER XL.

A WASTED LIFE.

Isaiah gives a description of the idolatry and worldliness of people in his time, and of a very prevalent style of diet in our time. The world spreads a great feast and invites the race to sit at it. Platters are heaped up. Chalices are full. Garlands wreathe the wall. The guests sit down amid outbursts of hilarity. They take the fruit and it turns into ashes. They uplift the tankards and their contents prove to be ashes. They touch the garlands and they scatter into ashes. I do not know any passage of Scripture which so apothegmatically sets forth the unsatisfactory nature of this world for eye, and tongue, and lip, and heart as this particular passage, describing the votary of the world, when it says: "He feedeth on ashes."

I shall not take the estimate by those whose life has been a failure. A man may despise the world simply because he cannot win it. Having failed, in his chagrin, he may decry that which he would like to have had as his bride. I shall, therefore, take only the testimony of those who have been magnificently successful. In the first place, I shall ask the kings of the earth to stand up and give testimony, telling of the long story of sleepless nights, and poisoned cups, and threatened invasion, and dreaded rebellion. Ask the Georges, ask the Henrys, ask the Marys, ask the Louises, ask the Catherines, whether they found the throne a safe seat, and the crown a pleasant covering. Ask the French guillotine in Madame Tussaud's Museum about the queenly necks it has dissevered. Ask the Tower of London and its headsman's



THE TOWER OF LONDON.

block. Ask the Tuileries, and Henry VIII., and Cardinal Woolsey to rise out of the dust, and say what they think of worldly honors. Ghastly with the first and the second death, they rise up with eyeless sockets and grinning skeletons, and stagger forth, unable at first to speak at all, but afterward hoarsely whispering: "Ashes! ashes!"

I call up also a group of commercial adepts to give testimony; and here again, those who have been only moderately successful may not testify. All the witnesses must be millionaires. What a grand thing it must be to own a railroad, to control a bank, to possess all the houses on one street, to have vast investments tumbling in upon you day after day, whether you work or not. No; no. William B. Astor, a few days before his death, sits in his office in New York, grieving almost until he is sick, because rents have gone down. A. T. Stewart finds his last days full of foreboding and doubt. When a Christian man proposes to talk to him about the matters of the soul, he cries: "Go away from me! Go away from me;" not satisfied until the man has got outside the door. Come up, ye millionaires, from various cemeteries and graveyards, and tell us now what you think of banks, and mills, and factories, and counting-houses, and marble palaces, and presidential banquets. They stagger forth and lean against the cold slab of the tomb, mouthing with toothless gums and gesticulating with fleshless hands and shivering with the chill of sepulchral dampness, while they cry out: "Ashes!"

I must call up now, also, a group of sinful pleasurists, and here again I will not take the testimony of those who had the more ordinary gratifications of life. Their pleasures are pyramidal. They bloomed paradisiacally. If they drank wine, it must be the best that was ever pressed from the vineyards of Hockheimer. If they listened to music, it must be costliest opera, with renowned prima donna. If they sinned, they chased polished uncleannesses and graceful despair and glittering damnation. Stand up, Alcibiades and Aaron Burr and Lord Byron and Queen Elizabeth—what think you now of midnight revel and sinful carnival and damask curtained abomination? Answer! The color goes out of the cheek, the dregs serpent-twisted in the bottom of the wine cup, the bright lights quenched in blackness of darkness, they jingle together the broken glasses, and rend the faded silks, and shut the door of the deserted banqueting-hall, while they cry: "A wasted life."

There are a great many who try to feed their soul on infidelity mixed with truth. They say the Bible has good things in it, but it is not inspired. They say Christ was a good man, but He was not inspired, and their religion is made up of ten degrees of humanitarianism and ten degrees of transcendentalism and ten degrees of egotism with one degree of Gospel truth, and on a poor, miserable cud they make their immortal soul chew, while the meadows of God's word are green and luxuriant with well-watered pastures. Did you ever see a happy infidel? Did you ever meet a placid sceptic? Did you ever find a contented atheist? Not one. From the days of Gibbon and Voltaire down, not one. They quarrel about God. They quarrel about the Bible. They quarrel about each other. They quarrel with themselves. They take all the divine teachings and gather them together, and under them they put the fires of their own wit, and scorn, and sarcasm, and then they dance in the light of that blaze, and they scratch amid the rubbish for something with which to help them in the days of trouble, and something to comfort them in the days of death, finding for their distraught and destroyed souls, nothing. Voltaire declared: "This globe seems to me more like a collection of carcases than of men. I wish I had never been born." Hume says: "I am like a man who has run on rocks and quicksands, and yet I contemplate putting out on the sea in the same leaky and weather-beaten craft." Chesterfield says: "I have been behind the scenes, and I have noticed the clumsy pulleys and the dirty ropes by which all the scene is managed, and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which throw the illumination on the stage, and I am tired and sick." Get up, then, Francis Newport, and Hume, and Voltaire, and Tom Paine, and all the infidels who have passed out of this world into the eternal world—get up now and tell what you think of all your grandiloquent derision at our holy religion. What do you think now of all your sarcasm at holy things? They come shrieking up from the lost world to the graveyards where their bodies were entombed, and point down to the white dust of dissolution, and cry: "A wasted life."

Oh, what a mistake for an immortal soul. What is that unrest that sometimes comes across you! Why is it that, surrounded by friends, and even the luxuries of life, you wish you were somewhere else, or had something you have not yet gained? The world calls it ambition. The physicians call it nervousness. Your friends call it the fidgets. I call it hunger—deep, grinding, unappeasable hunger. It starts with us when we are born, and goes on with us until the Lord God himself appeases it. It is seeking and delving and striving and planning to get something we cannot get. Wealth says: "It is not in me." Science says: "It is not in me." Worldly applause says: "It is not in me." Sinful indulgence says: "It is not in me." Where then is it? On the banks of what stream? Slumbering in what grotto? Marching in what contest? Expiring on what pillow? Tell me, for this winged and immortal spirit, is there nothing?

In communion with God, and everlasting trust of Him, is complete satisfaction. Solomon described it when he compared it to cedar houses and golden chairs and bounding reindeer and day-break and imperial couch; to saffron, to calamus, to white teeth, and hands heavy with gold rings, and towers of ivory and ornamental figures; but Christ calls it bread! O famished yet immortal soul, why not come and get it? Until our sins are pardoned, there is no rest. We know not at what moment the hounds may bay at us. We are in a castle and know not what hour it may be besieged; but when the soothing voice of Christ comes across our perturbation, it is hushed forever. A merchant in Antwerp loaned Charles V. a vast sum of money, taking for it a bond. One day this Antwerp merchant invited Charles V. to dine with him, and while they were seated at the table, in the presence of the guests, the merchant had a fire built on a platter in the center of the table. Then he took the bond which the King had given him for the vast sum of money, and held it in the blaze until it was consumed, and the King congratulated himself, and all the guests congratulated the King. There was gone at last the final evidence of his indebtedness. Mortgaged to God, we owe a debt we can never pay; but God invites us to the Gospel feast, and in the fires of crucifixion agony He puts the last record of our indebtedness, and it is consumed forever. It was so in the case of the dying thief expiring in dark despair, with the judgment to come staring him in the face, and the terrors of hell laying hold of his soul. He had faith in the Crucified One, and his faith won for him an immediate entrance into paradise.

Oh, to have all the sins of our past forgiven, and to have all possible security for the future—is not that enough to make a man happy? What makes that old Christian so placid? Most of his family lie in the village cemetery. His health is undermined. His cough will not let him sleep at night. From the day he came to town and he was a clerk, until this the day of his old age, it has been a hard fight for bread. Yet how happy he looks. Why? It is because he feels that the same God who watched him when he lay in his mother's arms is watching him in the time of old age, and unto God he has committed all his dead, expecting after a-while to see them again. He has no anxiety whether he go this summer or next summer—whether he be carried out through the snowbanks or through the daisies. Fifty years ago he learned that all this world could give was ashes, and he reached up and took the fruits of eternal life. You see his face is very white now. The crimson currents of life seem to have departed from it; but under that extreme whiteness of the old man's face is the flash of the day-break.

There is only one word in all our language that can describe his feelings, and that is the word that slipped off the angel's harp above Bethlehem—peace! And so there are hundreds of souls who have felt this Almighty comfort. Their reputation was pursued; their health shattered; their home was almost if not quite broken up; their fortune went. Why do they not sit down and give it up. Ah, they have no disposition to do that. They are saying while I speak: "It is my Father that mixes this bitter cup, and I will cheerfully drink it. Everything will be explained after awhile. I shall not always be under the harrow. There is something that makes me think I am almost home. God will yet wipe away all tears from my eyes." So say these bereft parents. So say these motherless children. So say a great many to-night.

Now, am I not right in trying to persuade all to give up ashes, and take bread, to give up the unsatisfactory things of this world, and take the glorious things of God and eternity? Why, if you kept this world as long as it lasts, you would have, after awhile, to give it up. There will be a great fire breaking out from the sides of the hills; there will be falling flame and ascending flame, and in it the earth will be whelmed. Fires burning from within, out; fires burning from above, down; this earth will be a furnace, and then it will be a living coal, and then it will be an expiring ember, and the thick clouds of smoke will lessen and lessen until there will be only a faint vapor curling up from the ruins, and then the very last spark of the earth will go out. And I see two angels meeting each other over the gray pile, and as one flits past it, he cries, "Ashes!" and the other, as he sweeps down the immensity, will respond, "Ashes!" while all the infinite space will echo and re-echo, "Ashes! Ashes! Ashes!" God forbid that we should choose such a mean portion.

My fear is, not that you will not see the superiority of Christ to this world, but my fear is that through some dreadful infatuation, you will relegate to the future that which God and angels, and churches militant and triumphant declare that you ought to do now. I do not say that you will go out of this world by the stroke of a horse's hoof, or that you will fall through a hatchway, or that a plank may slip from an insecure scaffolding and dash your life out, or that a bolt may fall on you from an August thunder-storm; but I do say that, in the vast majority of cases, your departure from the world will be wonderfully quick; and I want you to start on the right road before that crisis has plunged.

A Spaniard, in a burst of temper, slew a Moor. Then the Spaniard leaped over a high wall and met a gardener, and told him the whole story; and the gardener said: "I will make a pledge of confidence with you. Eat this peach and that will be a pledge that I will be your protector to the last." But, oh, the sorrow and surprise of the gardener when he found out that it was his own son that had been slain! Then he came to the Spaniard and said to him: "You were cruel, you ought to die, you slew my son, and yet I took a pledge with you, and I must keep my promise; and so he took the Spaniard to the stables and brought out the swiftest horse. The Spaniard sprang upon it and put many miles between him and the scene of crime, and perfect escape was effected.

We have, by our sins, slain the Son of God. Is there any possibility of our rescue? Oh, yes. God the Father says to us: "You had no business, by your sin, to slay my Son, Jesus; you ought to die, but I have promised you deliverance. I have made you the promise of eternal life, and you shall have it. Escape now for thy life." And to-night I act merely as the Lord's groom, and I bring you out to the King's stables, and I tell you to be quick and mount, and away. In this plain you perish, but housed in God you live. Oh, you pursued and almost overtaken one, put on more speed. Fly! fly! lest the black horse outrun the white horse, and the battle-axe shiver the helmet and crash down through the insufficient mail. In this tremendous exigency of your immortal spirit beware, lest you prefer ashes to bread.

CHAPTER XLI.

OFF THE TRACK.

With an insight into human nature such as no other man ever reached, Solomon sketches the mental operations of one who, having stepped aside from the path of rectitude, desires to return. With a wish for something better he said: "When shall I awake? When shall I come out of this horrid nightmare of iniquity?" But seized upon by uneradicated habit and forced down hill by his passions, he cries out: "I will seek it yet again. I will try it once more." Our libraries are adorned with an elegant literature addressed to young men, pointing out to them all the dangers and perils of life—complete maps of the voyage, showing all the rocks, the quicksands, the shoals. But suppose a man has already made shipwreck; suppose he is already off the track; suppose he has already gone astray, how is he to get back? That is a field comparatively untouched. I propose to address this chapter to such. There are those in the world who, with every passion of their agonized soul, are ready to hear such a discussion. They compare themselves with what they were ten years ago, and cry out from the bondage in which they are incarcerated. Now, if there be any feeling they are beyond the pale of Christian sympathy, and that this subject can hardly be expected to address them, then, at this moment, I give them my right hand, and call them brother. Look up. There is glorious and triumphant hope for you yet. I sound the trumpet of gospel deliverance. The Church is ready to spread a banquet at your return, and the hierarchs of heaven to fall into line of bannered procession at the news of your emancipation.

The first difficulty in the way of your return is the force of moral gravitation. Just as there is a natural law which brings down to the earth anything you throw into the air, so there is a corresponding moral gravitation. In other words, it is easier to go down than it is to go up; it is easier to do wrong than it is to do right. Call to mind the comrades of your boyhood days—some of them good, some of them bad—which most affected you? Call to mind the anecdotes that you have heard in the last five or ten years—some of them are pure and some of them impure. Which the more easily sticks to your memory? During the years of your life you have formed certain courses of conduct—some of them good, some of them bad. To which style of habit did you the more easily yield? Ah! my friends, we have to take but a moment of self-inspection to find out that there is in all our souls a force of moral gravitation. But that gravitation may be resisted. Just as you may pick up from the earth something and hold it in your hand toward heaven, just so, by the power of God's grace, a soul fallen may be lifted toward peace, toward pardon, toward heaven. Force of moral gravitation in every one of us, but power in God's grace to overcome that force of moral gravitation.

The next thing in the way of your return is the power of evil habit. I know there are those who say it is very easy for them to give up evil habits. I do not believe them. Here is a man given to intoxication. He knows it is disgracing his family, destroying his property, ruining him, body, mind and soul. If that man, being an intelligent man, and loving his family, could easily give up that habit, would he not do so? The fact that he does not give it up proves it is hard to give it up. It is a very easy thing to sail down stream, the tide carrying you with great force; but suppose you turn the boat up stream, is it so easy then to row it? As long as we yield to the evil inclinations in our hearts and our bad habits, we are sailing down stream; but the moment we try to turn we put our boat in the rapids just above Niagara, and try to row up stream.

Take a man given to the habit of using tobacco, and let him resolve to stop, and he finds it very difficult. Twenty-one years ago I quit that habit, and I would as soon dare to put my right hand in the fire as once indulge in it. Why? Because it was such a terrific struggle to get over it. Now, let a man be advised by his physician to give up the use of tobacco. He goes around not knowing what to do with himself. He cannot add up a line of figures. He cannot sleep nights. It seems as if the world had turned upside down. He feels his business is going to ruin. Where he was kind and obliging, he is scolding and fretful. The composure that characterized him has given way to a fretful restlessness, and he has become a complete fidget. What power is it that has rolled a wave of woe over the earth and shaken a portent in the heavens? He has tried to stop smoking! After awhile he says: "I am going to do as I please. The doctor doesn't understand my case. I'm going back to my old habit." And he returns. Everything assumes its usual composure. His business seems to brighten. The world becomes an attractive place to live in. His children, seeing the difference, hail the return of their father's genial disposition. What wave of color has dashed blue into the sky, and greenness into the mountain foliage, and the glow of sapphire into the sunset? What enchantment has lifted a world of beauty and joy on his soul? He has gone back to smoking

Oh! the fact is, as we all know in our own experience, that a habit is a taskmaster; as long as we obey it it does not chastise us, but let us resist and we find that we are to be lashed with scorpion whips and bound with ship cable, and thrown into the track of stone-breaking juggernauts. During the war of 1812 there was a ship set on fire just above Niagara Falls, and then, cut loose from its moorings, it came on down through the night and tossed over the falls. It was said to have been a scene brilliant beyond all description. Well, there are thousands of men on fire of evil habit, coming down through the rapids and through the awful night of temptation toward the eternal plunge. Oh! how hard it is to arrest them. Suppose a man after five, or ten, or twenty years of evil-doing, resolves to do right? Why, all the forces of darkness are allied against him. He cannot sleep nights. He gets down on his knees in the midnight and cries: "God help me!" He bites his lip. He grinds his teeth. He clinches his fist in a determination to keep his purpose. He dare not look at the bottles in the window of a wine store. It was one long, bitter, exhaustive, hand-to-hand fight with inflamed, tantalizing and merciless habit. When he thinks he is entirely free, the old inclinations pounce upon him like a pack of hounds with their muzzles tearing away at the flanks of one poor reindeer. In Paris there is a sculptured representation of Bacchus, the god of revelry. He is riding on a panther at full leap. Oh, how suggestive! Let every one who is speeding on bad ways understand he is not riding a docile and well-broken steed, but he is riding a monster, wild and bloodthirsty, going at a death leap. How many there are who resolve on a better life and say: "When shall I awake?" But seized on by their old habits, cry: "I will try it once more; I will seek it yet again!"

Years ago there were some Princeton students who were skating and the ice was very thin, and some one warned the company back from the air-hole, and finally warned them to leave the place. But one young man with bravado, after all the rest had stopped, cried out: "One round more!" He swept around and went down, and was brought out a corpse. My friends, there are thousands and tens of thousands of men losing their souls in that way. It is the one round more.

I have also to say that if a man wants to return from evil practices society repulses him. Desiring to reform, he says: "Now I will shake off my old associates, and I will find Christian companionship." And he appears at the church-door some Sabbath-day, and the usher greets him with a look, as much as to say: "Why, you here? You are the last man I ever expected to see at church! Come take this seat right down by the door!" Instead of saying: Good morning. I am glad you are here. Come; I will give you a first-rate seat right up by the pulpit." Well, the prodigal, not yet discouraged, enters a prayer-meeting, and some Christian man, with more zeal than common-sense, says: "Glad to see you. The dying thief was saved, and I suppose there is mercy for you!" The young man, disgusted, chilled, throws himself back on his dignity, resolved he never will enter the house of God again. Perhaps, not quite fully discouraged about reformation, he sidles up by some highly respectable man he used to know, going down the street, and immediately the respectable man has an errand down some other street. Well, the prodigal, wishing to return, takes some member of a Christian association by the hand, or tries to. The Christian young man looks at him, looks at the faded apparel and the marks of dissipation, and instead of giving him a warm grip of the hand, offers him the tip end of the long fingers of the left hand, which is equal to striking a man in the face.

Oh, how few Christian people understand how much force and gospel there is in a good, honest hand-shaking! Sometimes, when you felt the need of encouragement, and some Christian man has taken you heartily by the hand, have you not felt that thrilling through every fiber of your body, mind and soul, an encouragement that was just what you needed? You do not know anything at all about this unless you know when a man tries to return from evil courses of conduct he runs against repulsions innumerable. We say of some man, he lives a block or two from the church or half a mile from the church. There are people in our crowded cities who live a thousand miles from the church. Vast deserts of indifference between them and the house of God. The fact is, we must keep our respectability though thousands and tens of thousands perish. Christ sat with publicans and sinners. But if there came to the house of God a man with marks of dissipation upon him, people almost throw up their hands in horror, as much as to say: "Isn't it shocking?" How these dainty, fastidious Christians in all our churches are going to get into heaven I don't know, unless they have an especial train of cars, cushioned and upholstered, each one a car to himself! They can not go with the great herd of publicans and sinners. O ye who curl your lip of scorn at the fallen, I tell you plainly, if you had been surrounded by the same influences, instead of sitting to-day amid the cultured, and the refined, and the Christian, you would have been a crouching wretch in stable or ditch, covered with filth and abomination! It is not because you are naturally any better, but because the mercy of God has protected you. Who are you that, brought up in Christian circles and watched by Christian parentage, you should be so hard on the fallen?

I think men also are often hindered from return by the fact that churches are too often anxious about their membership, and too anxious about their denomination, and they rush out when they see a man about to give up his sin and return to God, and ask him how he is going to be baptized, whether by sprinkling or immersion, and what kind of church he is going to join. Oh, my friends, it is a poor time to talk about Presbyterian catechisms, and Episcopal liturgies, and Methodist love-feasts, and baptistries, to a man that is coming out of the darkness of sin into the glorious light of the gospel. Why, it reminds me of a man drowning in the sea, and a life-boat puts out for him, and the man in the boat says to the man out of the boat: "Now, if I get you ashore, are you going to live in my street?" First get him ashore, and then talk about the non-essentials of religion. Who cares what Church he joins, if he only joins Christ and starts for heaven? O, you ought to have, my brother, an illumined face, and a hearty grip for every one who tries to turn from his evil way. Take hold of the same book with him, though his dissipations shake the book, remembering that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins. Now, I have shown you these obstacles because I want you to understand I know all the difficulties in the way; but I am now to tell you how Hannibal may scale the Alps, and how the shackles may be unriveted, and how the paths of virtue forsaken may be regained.

First of all, throw yourself on God. Go to him frankly and earnestly, and tell him these habits you have, and ask him if there is any help in all the resources of omnipotent love, to give it to you. Do not go with a long rigmarole people call prayer, made up of "ohs" and "ahs" and "forever and forever amens!" Go to God and cry for help! help! help! and if you can not cry for help just look and live. I remember in the late war I was at Antietam, and I went into the hospitals after the battle, and I said to a man: "Where are you hurt?" He made no answer, but held up his arm, swollen and splintered. I saw where he was hurt. The simple fact is, when a man has a wounded soul all he has to do is to hold it up before a sympathetic Lord and get it healed. It does not take any long prayer. Just hold up the wound. O, it is no small thing when a man is nervous, and weak and exhausted, coming from his evil ways, to feel that God puts two omnipotent arms around about him and says: "Young man, I will stand by you. The mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but I will never fail you." And then, as the soul thinks the news is too good to be true, and can not believe it, and looks up in God's face, God lifts his right hand and takes an oath, an affidavit, saying: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Blessed be God for such a gospel as this!

"Cut the slices thin," said the wife to the husband, "or there will not be enough to go all around for the children; cut the slices thin." Blessed be God, there is a full loaf for every one that wants it; bread enough, and to spare. No thin slices at the Lord's table. I remember when the Master street Hospital, in Philadelphia, was opened, during the war, a telegram came saying: "There will be three hundred wounded men to-night; be ready to take care of them." And from my church there went in some twenty or thirty men and women to look after these poor wounded fellows. As they came, some from one part of the land, some from another, no one asked whether this man was from Oregon or Massachusetts, or from Minnesota or from New York. There was a wounded soldier, and the only question was how to take off the rags most gently and put on the bandage, and administer the cordial. And when a soul comes to God He does not ask where you came from or what your ancestry was. Healing for all your wounds. Pardon for all your guilt. Comfort for all your troubles.

Then, also, I counsel you, if you want to get back, to quit all your bad associations. One unholy intimacy will fill your soul with moral distemper. In all the ages of the Church there has not been an instance where a man kept one evil associate and was reformed. Among the fourteen hundred million of the race not one instance. Go home to-day, open your desk, take out letter paper, stamp and envelope, and then write a letter something like this: My old companions: I start this day for heaven. Until I am persuaded you will join me in this, farewell. Then sign your name and send the letter with the first post. Give up your bad companions, or give up heaven. It is not ten bad companions that destroy a man, nor five bad companions, nor three bad companions, but one. What chance is there for that young man I saw along the street, four or five young men with him, halting in front of a grogshop, urging him to go in, he resisting, violently resisting, until after awhile they forced him to go in? It was a summer night, and the door was left open and I saw the process. They held him fast and they put the cup to his lips, and they forced down the strong drink. What chance is there for such a young man?

I counsel you, also, seek Christian advice. Every Christian man is bound to help you. If you find no other human ear willing to listen to your story of struggle, come to me and I will, by every sympathy of my heart, and every prayer, and every toil of my hand, stand beside you in the struggle for reformation; and, as I hope to have my own sins forgiven, and hope to be acquitted at the judgment seat of Christ, I will not betray you. First of all, seek God, then seek Christian counsel. Gather up all the energies of body, mind and soul, and appealing to God for success, declare this day everlasting war against all drinking habits, all gaming practices, all houses of sin. Half-and-half work will amount to nothing; it must be a Waterloo. Shrink back now, and you are lost. Push on and you are saved. A Spartan General fell at the very moment of victory, but he dipped his finger in his own blood and wrote on a rock near which he was dying: "Sparta has conquered." Though your struggle to get rid of sin may seem to be almost a death struggle, you can dip your finger in your own blood and write on the Rock of Ages: "Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

O, what glorious news it would be for some of the young men of our cities to send home to their parents in the country these holidays which are coming. They go to the postoffice every day or two to see whether there are any letters from you. How anxious they are to hear! You might send them for a holiday present this season, a book from one of our best publishing houses, or a complete wardrobe from the importer's palace, but it would not please them half as much as the news you might send home to-morrow that you had given your heart to God. I know how it is in the country. The night comes on. The cattle stand under the rack through which burst the trusses of hay. The horses just having frisked up from the meadow at the nightfall, stand knee-deep in the bright straw that invites them to lie down and rest. The perch of the hovel is full of fowl, their feet warm under their feathers. In the old farm house at night no candle is lighted, for the flames clap their hands about the great black log, and shake the shadow of the group up and down the wall. Father and mother sit there for half an hour, saying nothing. I wonder what they are thinking of. After awhile the father breaks the silence and says: "Well, I wonder where our boy is in town to-night?" And the mother answers: "In no bad place, I warrant you; we always could trust him when he was home, and since he has been away there have been so many prayers offered for him we can trust him still." Then at 8 o'clock—for they retire early in the country—they kneel down and commend you to that God who watches in country and in town, on the land and on the sea.

Some one said to a Grecian general: "What was the proudest moment in your life?" He thought a moment, and said: "The proudest moment in my life was when I sent word home to my parents that I had gained a victory." And the proudest and most brilliant moment in your life will be the moment when you can send word to your parents that you have conquered your evil habits by the grace of God, and become eternal victor. Oh, despise not parental anxiety.

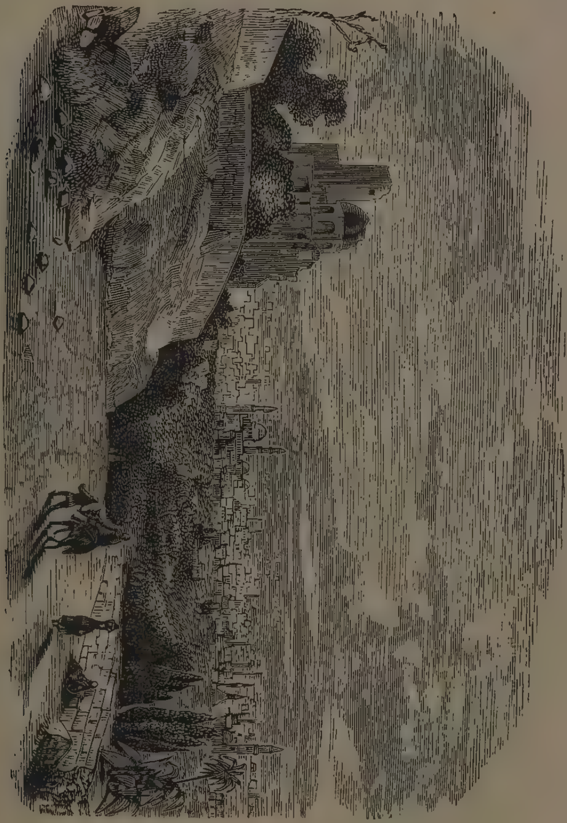
The time will come when you will have neither father nor mother, and you will go around the place where they used to watch you, and find them gone from the house, and gone from the field, and gone from the neighborhood. Cry as loud for forgiveness as you may over the mound in the churchyard, they will not answer. Dead! dead! And then you will take out the white lock of hair that was cut from your mother's brow just before they buried her, and you will take the cane with which your father used to walk, and you will think and think and wish that you had done just as they wanted you to, and would give the world if you had never thrust a pang through their dear old hearts. God pity the young man who has brought disgrace on his father's name! God pity the young man who has broken his mother's heart! Better if he had never been born—better if in the first hour of his life, instead of being laid against the warm bosom of maternal tenderness, he had been coffined and sepulchered. There is no balm powerful enough to heal the heart of one who has brought parents to a sorrowful grave, and who wanders about through the dismal cemetery, rending the hair, and wringing the hands, and crying: "Mother! Mother!" Oh, that to-day, by all the memories of the past, and by all the hopes of the future, you would yield your heart to God. May your father's God and your mother's God be your God forever!

CHAPTER XLII.

LEPERS.

Naaman was a warrior sick, not with pleurisy, nor rheumatism, nor consumptions, but with a disease worse than all these put together; a red mark has come out on the forehead, precursor of complete disfigurement and dissolution. He, the commander-in-chief of all the Syrian forces, has the leprosy! It is on his hands, on his face, on his feet, on his entire person. The leprosy! Get out of the way of the pestilence! If his breath strikes you, you are a dead man. The Commander-in-chief of all the forces of Syria! And yet he would be glad to exchange conditions with the boy at his stirrup, or the hostler that blankets his charger. The news goes like wildfire all through the realm, and the people are sympathetic, and they cry out: "Is it possible that our great hero who shot Ahab, and around whom we came with such vociferation when he returned from victorious battle—can be possible that our grand and glorious Naaman has the leprosy?"

Yes. Everybody has something he wishes he had not—David, an Absalom to disgrace him; Paul, a thorn to sting him; Job, carbuncles to plague him; Samson, a Delilah to shear him; Ahab, a Naboth to deny him; Haman, a Mordecai to irritate him; George Washington, childishness to afflict him; John Wesley, a termagant wife to pester him; Leah, weak eyes; Pope, a crooked back; Byron, a club foot; John Milton, blind eyes; Charles Lamb, an insane sister; and you, something which you never bargained for and would like to get rid of. The reason of this is that God does not want this world to be too bright; otherwise, we would always want to stay, and eat these fruits, and lie on these lounges, and shake hands in this pleasant society. We are only in the vestibule of a grand temple. God does not want us to stay on the doorstep, and therefore he sends aches and annoyances and sorrows and bereavements of all sorts to push us on, and push us up toward riper fruits and brighter society



CITY OF DAMASCUS.

and more radiant prosperities. God is only whipping us ahead. The reason that Edward Payson and Robert Hall had more rapturous views of heaven than other people had was because, through their aches and pains, God pushed them nearer up to it. If God dashes out one of your pictures, it is only to show you a brighter one. If he sting your foot with gout, your brain with neuralgia, your tongue with an inextinguishable thirst, it is only because he is preparing to substitute a better body than you ever dreamed of, when the mortal shall put on immortality. It is to push you on, and push you up toward something grander and better, that God sends upon you as he did upon Naaman, something you do not want. Seated in his Syrian mansion—all the walls glittering with the shields which he had captured in battle; the corridors crowded with admiring visitors who just wanted to see him once; music and mirth, and banqueting filling all the mansion, from tesselated floor to pictured ceiling—Naaman would have forgotten that there was anything better, and would have been glad to stay there ten thousand years. But oh, how the shields dim, and how the visitors fly from the hall, and how the music drops dead from the string, and how the gates of the mansion slam shut with sepulchral bang, as you read the closing words of the eulogium: "He was a leper! He was a leper!"

There was one person more sympathetic with General Naaman than any other person. Naaman's wife walks the floor, wringing her hands and trying to think what she can do to alleviate her husband's sufferings. All remedies have failed. The surgeon general and the doctors of the royal staff have met, and they have shaken their heads as much as to say: "No cure; no cure." I think that the office-seekers had all folded up their recommendations and gone home. Probably most of the employes of the establishment had dropped their work and were thinking of looking for some other situation. What shall now become of poor Naaman's wife? She must have sympathy somewhere. In her despair she goes to a little Hebrew captive, a servant girl in her house, to whom she tells the whole story; as sometimes, when overborne with the sorrows of the world, and finding no sympathy anywhere else, you have gone out and found in the sympathy of some humble domestic—Rose, or Dinah, or Bridget--a help which the world could not give you.

What a scene it was! One of the grandest women in all Syria in cabinet council with a waiting maid over the declining health of the mighty General!

"I know something," says the little captive maid, "I know something," as she bounds to her bare feet. "In the land from which I was stolen there is a certain prophet known by the name of Elisha, who can cure almost everything, and I shouldn't wonder if he could cure my master. Send for him right away." "Oh, hush!" you say. "If the highest medical talent in all the land cannot cure that leper, there is no need of your listening to any talk of a servant girl."

But do not scoff, do not sneer. The finger of that little captive maid is pointing in the right direction. She might have said: "This is a judgment on you for stealing me away from my native land. Didn't they snatch me off in the night, breaking my father's and mother's heart? And many a time I have laid and cried all night because I was so homesick."

Then flushing up into childish indignation she might have said: "Good for them; I'm glad Naaman's got the leprosy; I wish all the Syrians had the leprosy." No. Forgetting her own personal sorrows, she sympathizes with the suffering of her master and recommends him to the famous Hebrew prophet. And how often it is that the finger of childhood has pointed grown persons in the right direction. O, Christian soul, how long is it since you got rid of the leprosy of sin? You say: "Let me see. It must be five years now."

"Five years. Who was it that pointed you to the divine physician?" "Oh," you say, "it was my little Annie, or Fred, or Charley, that clambered upon my knees and looked in my face and asked me why I didn't become a Christian, and all the time stroking my cheek so I couldn't get angry, insisted upon knowing why I didn't have family prayers."

There are many grandparents who have been brought to Christ by their little grandchildren. There are many Christian mothers who had their attention first called to Jesus by their little children. How did you get rid of the leprosy of sin? How did you find your way to the divine physician? "Oh," you say, "my child, my dying child, with wan and wasted finger pointed that way! Oh, I shall never forget that scene at the cradle and the crib that awful night! It was hard, hard, very hard; but if that little one on its dying bed had not pointed me to Christ, I don't think I ever would have got rid of my leprosy."

Go into our Sabbath-schools and you will find hundreds of little fingers pointing in the same direction, toward Jesus Christ and toward heaven. Years ago the astronomers calculated that there must be a world hanging at a certain point in the heavens, and a large prize was offered for some one who could discover that world. The telescopes from the great observatories were pointed in vain, but a girl at Nantucket, Mass., fashioned a telescope, and, looking through it, discovered that star, and won the prize and the admiration of all the astronomical world, that stood amazed at her genius. And so it is often the case that grown people cannot see the light, while some little child beholds the star of pardon, the star of hope, the star of consolation, the star of Bethlehem, the morning star of Jesus. "Not many mighty men, not many wise men are called; but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; and base things and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are."

Oh, do not despise the prattle of little children when they are speaking about God and Christ and heaven! You see the way your child is pointing; will you take that pointing or wait until in the wrench of some awful bereavement God shall lift that child to another world, and then it will beckon you upward? Will you take the pointing or will you wait for the beckoning? Blessed be God that the little Hebrew captive pointed in the right direction! Blessed be God for the saving ministry of Christian children! No wonder the advice of this little Hebrew captive threw all Naaman's mansion and Ben-hadad's palace into excitement. Good-bye. Naaman! With face scarified and ridged, and inflamed by the pestilence, and aided by those who supported him on either side, he staggers out to the chariot. Hold fast the fiery coursers of the royal stable while the poor sick man lifts his swollen feet and pain-struck limbs into the vehicle. Bolster him up with the pillows, and let him take a lingering look at his bright apartment, for perhaps the Hebrew captive may be mistaken, and the next time Naaman comes to that place he may be a dead weight on the shoulders of those who carry him—an expired chieftain seeking sepulture amid the lamentations of an admiring nation. Good-bye, Naaman! Let the charioteer drive gently over the hills of Hermon lest he jolt the invalid. Here goes the bravest man of all his day, a captive of a horrible disease. As the ambulance winds through the streets of Damascus the tears and prayers of all the people go after the world-renowned invalid. Perhaps you have had an invalid go out from your house on a health excursion. You know how the neighbors stood around and said. "Ah! he will never come back again alive!"

Oh, it was a solemn moment, I tell you, when the invalid had departed, and you went into the room to make the bed, and to remove the medicine phials from the shelf, and to throw open the shutters so that the fresh air might rush into the long-closed room. Good-bye, Naaman. There is only one cheerful face looking at him, and that is the face of the little Hebrew captive, who is sure he will get cured, and who is so glad she helped him. As the chariot winds out, and the escort of mounted courtiers, and the mules laden with sacks of gold and silver and embroidered suits of apparel went through the gates of Damascus, and out on the long way, the hills of Napthali and Ephraim look down on the procession, and the retinue goes right past the battle-fields where Naaman, in the days of his health, used to rally his troops for fearful onset; and then the procession stops and reclines awhile in the groves of olives and oleander, and Gen. Naaman so sick—and so very, very sick.

How the countrymen gaped as the procession passed; They had seen Naaman go past like a whirlwind in days gone by, and had stood aghast at the clank of his war equipments; but now they commiserate him. They say: "Poor man, he will never get home alive! Poor man!" Gen. Naaman wakes up from a restless sleep in the chariot, and he says to the charioteer: "How long before we shall reach this Prophet Elisha's?" The charioteer says to a waysider: "How far is it to Elisha's house?" He says: "Two miles." Then they whip up the lathered and fagged-out horses. The whole procession brightens up at the prospect of speedy arrival. They drive up to the door of the prophet. The charioteers shout "Whoa!" to the horses, and the tramping hoofs and grinding wheels cease shaking the earth.

Come out, Elisha, come out; you have company; the grandest company that ever came to your house has come to it now. No stir inside Elisha's house. The fact was, the Lord had informed Elisha that the sick captain was coming and just how to treat him. Indeed, when you are sick and the Lord wants you to get well, he always tells the doctor how to treat you; and the reason we have so many bungling doctors is because they depend upon their own strength and instructions and not on the Lord God, and that always makes malpractice. Come out, Elisha, and attend to your business.

Gen. Naaman and his retinue waited, and waited, and waited. The fact was, Naaman had two diseases—pride and leprosy; the one was as hard to get rid of as the other. Elisha sits quietly in his house and does not go out. After awhile, when he thinks he has humbled this proud man, he says to a servant: "Go out and tell Gen. Naaman to bathe seven times in the River Jordan, out yonder five miles, and he will get entirely well." The messenger comes out: "What!" says the commander-in-chief of the Syrian forces, his eyes kindling with an animation which it had not shown for weeks, and his swollen foot stamping on the bottom of the chariot, regardless of pain: "What! Isn't he coming out to see me? Why, I thought certainly he would come and utter some cabalistic words over me or make some enigmatical passes over my wounds. Why, I don't think he knows who I am. Isn't he coming out? Why, when the Shunannite woman came to him he rushed out and cried: 'Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?' And will he treat a poor unknown woman like that, and let me, a titled personage, sit here in my chariot and wait and wait? I won't endure it any longer. Charioteer, drive on! Wash in the Jordan! Ha! ha! The slimy Jordan—the muddy Jordan—the monotonous Jordan. I wouldn't be seen washing in such a river as that. Why, we watered our horses in a better river than that on our way here. The beautiful river, the jasper-paved river of Pharpar. Besides that, we have in our country another Damascene river, Abana, with foliaged bank and torrent ever swift and ever clear, under the flickering shadows of sycamore and oleander. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?"

I suppose Naaman felt very much as we would feel if, by way of medical prescription, some one should tell us to go and wash in the Danube or the Rhine. We would answer: "Are not the Connecticut or the Hudson just as good?" Or, as an Englishman would feel if he were told, by way of medical prescription, he must go and wash in the Mississippi or St. Lawrence. He would cry out: "Are not the Thames and the Shannon just as well?"

The fact was that haughty Naaman needed to learn what every Englishman and every American needs to learn—that when God tells you to do a thing, you must go and do it, whether you understand the reason or not. Take the prescription, whether you like it or not. One thing is certain: Unless haughty Naaman does as Elisha commands him, he will die of his awful sickness. And unless you do as Christ commands you, you will be seized upon by an everlasting wasting away. Obey and live—disobey and die. Thrilling, over-arching, under-girding, stupendous alternative!

Well, Gen. Naaman could not stand the test. The charioteer gives a jerk to the right line until the bit snaps in the horse's mouth, and the whirr of the wheels and the flying of the dust show the indignation of the great commander. "He turned and went away in a rage." So people now often get mad at religion. They vituperate against ministers, against churches, against Christian people. One would think from their irate behavior that God had been studying how to annoy and exasperate and demolish them. What has He been doing? Only trying to cure their death-dealing leprosy? That is all. Yet they whip up their horses, they dig in the spurs, and they go away in a rage.

So, after all, it seems that this health excursion of Gen. Naaman is to be a dead failure. That little Hebrew captive might as well have not told him of the prophet, and this long journey might as well not have been taken. Poor, sick, dying Naaman! are you going away in high dudgeon and worse than when you came? As his chariot halts a moment his servants clamber up in it and coax him to do as Elisha said. They say: "It's easy. If the prophet had told you to walk for a mile on sharp spikes in order to get rid of this awful disease you would have done it. It is easy. Come, my lord, just get down and wash in the Jordan. You take a bath every day, anyhow. and in this climate, it is so hot that it will do you good. Do it on our account and for the sake of the army you command, and for the sake of the nation that admires you. Come, my lord, just try this Jordanic bath." "Well," he says, "to please you I will do as you say."

The retinue drive to the brink of the Jordan. The horses paw and neigh to get into the stream themselves and cool their hot flanks. Gen. Naaman, assisted by his attendants, gets down out of his chariot and painfully comes to the brink of the river, and steps in until the water comes to the ankle, and goes on deeper until the water comes to the girdle, and now standing so far down in the stream, just a little inclination of the head will thoroughly immerse him. He bows once into the flood, and comes up and shakes the water out of his nostrils and eyes, and his attendants look at him, and say:

"Why, General, how much better you do look." And he bows a second time into the flood and comes up, and the wild stare is gone out of his eye. He bows a third time into the flood and comes up, and his shriveled flesh has got smooth again. He bows the fourth time into the flood and comes up, and the hair that had fallen out is restored in thick locks again all over the brow. He bows the fifth time into the flood and comes up, and the hoarseness has gone out of his throat. He bows the sixth time and comes up, and all the soreness and anguish have gone out of the limbs. "Why," he says, "I am almost well, but I will make a complete cure," and he bows the seventh time into the flood, and he comes up, and not so much as a fester, or scale, or an eruption as big as the head of a pin is to be seen on him. He steps out on the bank and says: "Is it possible?" And the attendants look and say: "Is it possible?" And as, with the health of an athlete, he bounds back into the chariot and drives on, there goes up from all his attendants a wild "Hussa! huzza!"

Of course they go back to pay and thank the man of God for his counsel so fraught with wisdom. When they left the prophet's house they went off mad; they have come back glad.

People always think better of a minister after they are converted than they do before conversion. Now, we are to them an intolerable nuisance because we tell them to do things that go against the grain; but some of us have a great many letters from those who tell us that once they were angry at what we preached, but afterward gladly received the gospel at our hands. They once called us fanatics or terrorists of enemies; now they call us friends. I know a man—I speak a literal fact—who said that he would never come into my church again. He said: "My family shall never come again if such doctrines as that are preached."

But he came again, and his family came again. He is a Christian, his wife a Christian, all his children Christians, the whole household Christian, and I shall dwell with them in the house of the Lord forever. Our undying coadjutors are those who once heard the gospel and "went away in a rage."

Now, my readers, you notice that this Gen. Naaman did two things in order to get well. The first was—he got out of his chariot. He might have staid there with his swollen feet on the stuffed ottoman, seated on that embroidered cushion, until his last gasp, and he would never have got any relief. He had to get down out of his chariot. And you have got to get down out of the chariot of your pride if you ever become a Christian. You can not drive up to the cross with a coach-and-four, and be saved among all the spangles. You seem to think that the Lord is going to be complimented by your coming. Oh, no; you poor, miserable, scaly, leprous sinner, get down out of that! We all come in the same naughty way. We expect to ride in the kingdom of God. Never until we get down on our knees will we find mercy.

The Lord has unhorsed us, unchariotted us. Get down out of your self-righteousness and your hypercriticism. We have all got to do that. That is the journey we have got to make on our knees. It is our infernal pride that keeps us from getting rid of the leprosy of sin. Dear Lord, what have we to be proud of? Proud of our scales? Proud of our uncleanness? Proud of this killing infection? Bring us down at thy feet, weeping, praying, penitent, believing supplicants!

But he had not only to get down out of his chariot. He had to wash. "Oh," you say, "I am very careful of my ablutions. Every day I plunge into a bright and beautiful bath." Ah, there is a flood brighter than any other. It is the flood that breaks from the granite of the eternal hills. It is the flood of pardon, and peace, and life, and heaven. That flood started in the tears of Christ and the sweat of Gethsemane, and rolled on, accumulating flood, until all earth and heaven could bathe in it. Zechariah called it the "fountain open for sin and uncleanness." William Cowper called it the "fountain filled with blood." Your fathers and mothers washed all their sins and sorrows away in that fountain. Oh, dear reader, do you not feel to-day like wading into it? Wade down now into this glorious flood, deeper, deeper, deeper. Plunge once, twice, thrice, four times, five times, six times, seven times. It will take as much as that to cure your soul. Oh, wash, wash, wash, and be clean!

I suppose that was a great time at Damascus when General Naaman got back. The charioteers did not have to drive slowly any longer, lest they jolt the invalid; but as the horses dashed through the streets of Damascus I think the people rushed out to hail back their chieftain. Naaman's wife hardly recognized her husband. He was so wonderfully changed she had to look at him two or three times before she made out that he was her restored husband. And the little captive maid, she rushed out, clapping her hands, and shouting: "Did he cure you? Did he cure you?" Then music woke up the palace, and the tapestry of the windows was drawn away, that the multitudes outside might mingle with the princely mirth inside; and the feet went up and down in the dance, and all the streets in Damascus that night echoed and re-echoed with the news: "Naaman's cured! Naaman's cured!" But a gladder tune than that it would be wherever this chapter shall be read, if the soul should get cured of its leprosy. The swiftest white horse hitched to the King's chariot would rush the news in the eternal city. Our loved ones before the throne would welcome the glad tidings. Your children on earth with more emotion than the little Hebrew captive would notice the change in your look, and the change in your manner, and would put their arms around your neck and say: "Mother, I guess you must have become a Christian. Father, I think you have got rid of the leprosy." Oh, Lord God of Elisha; have mercy on us!

CHAPTER XLIII.

"BROKEN PIECES OF THE SHIP."

Never off Goodwin Sands, or the Skerries, or Cape Hatteras was a ship in worse predicament than in the Mediterranean hurricane was the grain ship, on which two hundred and seventy-six passengers were driven on the coast of Malta, five miles from the metropolis of that island called Civita Vecchia. After a two weeks' tempest and the ship was entirely disabled, and captain and crew had become completely demoralized, an old missionary took command of the vessel. He was small, crooked-backed and sore-eyed, according to tradition. It was Paul, the only unscared man aboard. He was no more afraid of a Euroclydon tossing the Mediteranean Sea, now up to the gates of heaven and now sinking it to the gates of hell, than he was afraid of a kitten playing with a string. He ordered them all down to take their rations, first asking for them a blessing. Then he insured all their lives, telling them they would be rescued, and, so far from losing their heads, they would not lose so much of their hair as you could cut off with one click of the scissors; aye, not a thread of it, whether it were gray with age or golden with youth. "There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you."

Knowing that they can never get to the desired port, they make the sea, on the fourteenth night black with overthrown cargo, so that when the ship strikes it will not strike so heavily. At daybreak they saw a creek, and in their exigency resolved to make for it. And so they cut the cables, took in the two paddles that they had on these old boats, and hoisted the main sail so that they might come with such force as to be driven high upon the beach by some fortunate billow. There she goes—tumbling toward the rock, now prow foremost, now stern foremost, now rolling over to the starboard, now a wave dashes clear over the deck, and it seems as if the old craft has gone forever. But up she comes again. Paul's arm around a mast, he cries: "All is well! God has given me all those that sail with me."

Crash went the prow with such force that it broke off the mast. Crash went the timbers till the sea rushed through from side to side of the vessel. She parts amidships, and into a thousand fragments, and into the waves two hundred and seventy-six mortals are precipitated. Some of them had been brought up on the seashore and had learned to swim, and with their chins just above the waves, and by stroke of both arms and propulsion of both feet, they put out for the beach and reach it. But, alas! for those others. They have never learned to swim, or they were wounded by the falling of the mast, or the nervous shock was too great for them. And others had been weakened by the long sea-sicknesses.

Oh, what will become of them? "Take that piece of a rudder," says Paul to one. "Take that fragment of a spar," says Paul to another. "Take that table." "Take that image of Castor and Pollux." Take that plank from the lifeboat." "Take anything and head for the beach." What a struggle for life in the breakers! Oh, the merciless waters, how they sweep over the heads of men, women and children! Hold on there! Almost ashore, keep up your courage! Remember what Paul told you.. There, the receding wave on the beach leaves in the sand a whole family. There crawls up out of the surf the centurion. There another piece of the shattered vessel with its freightage of an immortal soul. They must by this time all be saved. Yes; there comes in last of all, for he had been overseeing the rest, the old missionary, who wrings the water from his gray beard, and cries out: "Thank God, all are here!"

Gather them around the fire and call the roll. Paul builds a fire, and when the bundles of sticks begin to crackle, and, standing and sitting around the blaze, the passengers begin to recover from their chill, and their wet clothes begin to dry, and warmth begins to come into all the shivering passengers, let the purser of the vessel go round and see if any of the poor creatures are missing. Not one of the crowd that were plunged into the sea. How it relieves our anxiety as we read the story: Some on broken pieces of the ship, and so it came to pass they all escaped safe to land.

There is something about those who came in on broken pieces of the ship that excites in me an intense interest. I am not so much interested in those that could swim. They got ashore, as I expected. A mile of water is not a very great undertaking for a strong swimmer, or even two miles are not. But I cannot stop thinking about those on broken pieces of the ship. The great gospel ship is the finest vessel of the universe, and can carry more passengers than any ship ever constructed, and you could no more wreck it than you could wreck the throne of God Almighty. I wish all the people would come aboard of her. I could not promise a smooth voyage, for ofttimes it will be tempestuous, or a chopped sea, but I could promise safe arrival for all who took passage on that Great Eastern, so-called by me because its commander came out of the East, the star of the East a badge of his authority But a vast multitude do not take regular passage. Their theology is broken in pieces, and their lives are broken in pieces, and their habits are broken in pieces, and their worldly and spiritual prospects are broken in pieces, and yet I believe they are going to reach the shining shore, and I am encouraged by the experience of those people who came in on some broken pieces of the ship.

One object I have in this chapter is to encourage all those who can not take the whole system of religion as we believe it, but who really believe something, to come ashore on that one plank. I do not underrate the value of a great theological system, but where in all the Bible is there anything that says: Believe in John Calvin and thou shalt be saved, or believe in Arminius and thou shalt be saved, or believe in the Synod of Dort and thou shalt be saved, or believe in the Thirty-nine Articles and thou shalt be saved? A man may be orthodox and go to hell, or heterodox and go to heaven. The man who, in the deep affection of his heart, accepts Christ is saved, and the man who does not accept him is lost. I believe in both the Heidelberg and Westminster catechisms, and I wish you all did, but you may believe in nothing they contain except the one idea that Christ came to save sinners, and that you are one of them, and you are instantly rescued. If you can come in the grand old ship, I would rather have you get aboard, but if you can find only a piece of wood as long as the human body or a piece as wide as the outspread human arms, and either of them is a piece of the cross, come in on that piece. Tens of thousands of people are to-day kept out of the kingdom of God because they can not believe everything.

I am talking with a man thoughtful about his soul who has lately traveled through New England and passed the night at Andover. He says to me: "I can not believe that in this life the destiny is irrevocably fixed; I think there will be another opportunity of repentance after death." I say to him: "My brother, what has that to do with you? Don't you realize that the man who waits for another chance after death when he has a good chance before death is a stark fool? Had not you better take the plank that is thrown to you now and head for the shore, rather than wait for a plank that may by invisible hands be thrown to you after you are dead? Do as you please, but as for myself, with pardon for all my sins offered me now, and all the joys of time and eternity offered me now, I instantly take them rather than run the risk of such other chance as wise men think they can peel off or twist out of a scripture passage that has for all the Christian centuries been interpreted another way."

You say: "I do not like Princeton theology, or New Haven theology, or Andover theology." I do not ask you on board either of these great men-of-war, their port-holes filled with great siege-guns of ecclesiastical battle. But I do ask you to take the one plank of the Gospel that you do believe in and strike out for the pearl-strung beach of heaven.

Says some other man: "I would attend to religion if I was quite sure about the doctrine of election and free agency, but that mixes me all up." Those things used to bother me, but I have no more perplexity about them, for I say to myself: "If I love Christ and live a good, honest, useful life, I am elected to be saved; and if I do not love Christ and live a bad life, I will be damned, and all the theological seminaries of the universe can not make it any different." I floundered a long while in the sea of sin and doubt, and it was as rough as the Mediterranean on the fourteenth night, when they threw the grain overboard, but I saw there was mercy for a sinner, and that plank I took, and I have been warming myself by the bright fire on the shore for three decadès.

While I am talking to another man about his soul he tells me: "I do not become a Christian because I do not believe there is any hell at all." Ah! don't you? Do all the people, of all beliefs and no belief at all, of good morals and bad morals, go straight to a happy heaven? Do the holy and the debauched have the same destination? At midnight in a hallway the owner of a house and a burglar meet each other, and they both fire, and both are wounded, but the burglar died in five minutes and the owner of the house lives a week after; will the burglar be at the gate of heaven waiting when the house-owner comes in? Will the debauchee and the libertine go right in among the families of heaven? I wonder if Herod is playing on the banks of the River of Life with the children he massacred. I wonder if Charles Guiteau or John Wilkes Booth are up there shooting at a mark. I do not now controvert it, although I must say that for such a miserable heaven I have no admiration. But the Bible does not say, "Believe in perdition and be saved." Because all are saved, according to your theory, that ought not to keep you from loving and serving Christ. Do not refuse to come ashore because all the others, according to your theory, are going to get ashore. You may have a different theory about chemistry, about astronomy, about the atmosphere, from that which others adopt, but you are not therefore hindered from action. Because your theory of light is different from others, do not refuse to open your eyes. Because your theory of air is different you do not refuse to breathe. Because your theory about the stellar system is different, you do not refuse to acknowledge the North Star. Why should the fact that your theological theories are different hinder you from acting upon what you know? If you have not a whole ship fashioned in the theological dry docks to bring you to wharfage, you have at least a plank.

"But I don't believe in revivals!" Then go to your room, and all alone with your door locked give your heart to God and join some Church where the thermometer never gets higher than fifty in the shade. "But I do not believe in baptism!" Come in without it, and settle that matter afterward. "But there are so many inconsistent Christians!" Then come in and show them by a good example how professors ought to act. "But I don't believe in the Old Testament!" Then come in on the New. "But I don't like the Book of Romans!" Then come in on Matthew or Luke. Refusing to come to Christ, whom you admit to be the Saviour of the lost, because you can not admit other things you are like a man out there in that Mediterranean tempest and tossed in the Melita breakers, refusing to come ashore until he can mend the pieces of the broken ship. I hear him say: "I won't go in on any of these planks until I know in what part of the ship they belong. When I can get the windlass in the right place, and the sails set, and that keel-piece where it belongs, and that floor timber right, and these ropes untangled, I will go ashore. I am an old sailor and know all about ships for forty years, and as soon as I can get the vessel afloat in good shape I will come in."

A man drifting by on a piece of wood overhears him and says: "You will drown before you get that ship reconstructed. Better do as I am doing. I know nothing about ships, and never saw one before I came on board this, and I can not swim a stroke, but I am going ashore on this shivered timber." The man in the offing while trying to mend his ship goes down. The man who trusted to the plank is saved. O, my brother, let your smashed-up system of theology go to the bottom while you come in on a splintered spar!

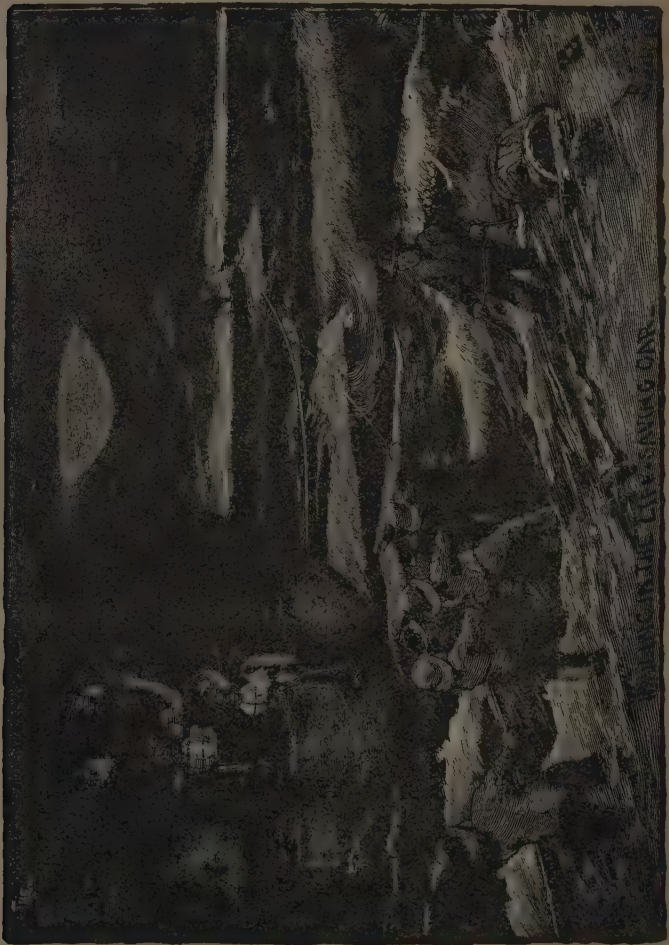
You may get all your difficulties settled, as Garibaldi, the megnetic Italian, got his gardens made. When the war between Austria and Sardinia broke out he was living at Caprera, a very rough and uncultured island home. But he went forth with his sword to achieve the liberation of Naples and Sicily, and gave nine million people free government under Victor Emmanuel. Garibaldi, after being absent two years from Caprera, returned, and, when he approached it, he found that his home had, by Victor Emmanuel, as a surprise, been Edenized. Trimmed shrubbery had taken the place of thorny thickets, gardens the place of barrenness, and the old rookery in which he once lived had given way to a pictured mansion, where he lived in comfort the rest of his days. And I tell you if you will come and enlist under the banner of our Victor Emmanuel, and follow him through thick and thin, and fight his battles, and endure his sacrifices, you will find after awhile that he has changed your heart from a jungle of thorny skepticisms into a garden all a-bloom with luxuriant joy that you have never dreamt of. From a tangled Caprera of sadness into a paradise of God!

I do not know how your theological system went to pieces. It may be that your parents started you with only one plank, and you believe little or nothing. Or they may have been too rigid and severe in religious discipline and cracked you over the head with a psalm-book. It may be that some partner in business who was a member of an evangelical church played on you a trick that disgusted you with religion. It may be that you have associates who have talked against Christianity in your presence until you are "all at sea," and you dwell more on things that you do not believe than on things you do believe. You are in one respect like Lord Nelson, when a signal was lifted that he wished to disregard and he put his sea-glass to his blind eye and said: "I really do not see the signal." O, put this field-glass of the Gospel no longer to your blind eye and say I can not see, but put it to your other eye, the eye of faith, and you will see Christ, and he is all you need to see.

If you can believe nothing else, you certainly believe in vicarious suffering, for you see it almost every day in some shape. Some time ago the steamship Knickerbocker, of the Cromwell Line, running between New Orleans and New York, was in great storms, and the captain and crew saw the schooner Mary D. Cranmer, of Philadelphia, in distress. The weather cold, the waves mountain high, the first officer of the steamship and four men put out in a lifeboat to save the crew of the schooner, and reached the vessel and towed it out of danger, the wind shifting so that the schooner was saved. But the five men of the steamship coming back, their boat capsized, yet righted again and came on, the sailors coated with ice. The boat capsized again, and three times upset and was righted, and a line was thrown the poor fellows, but their hands and arms were frozen so they could not grasp it, and a great wave rolled over them, and they went down, never to rise till the sea gives up its dead. Appreciate that heroism and self-sacrifice of the brave fellows we all can, and can we not appreciate the Christ who put out in a more biting cold and into a more overwhelming surge to bring us out of infinite peril into everlasting safety? The wave of human hate rolled over him from one side, and the wave of hellish fury rolled over him on the other side. Oh, the thickness of the night and the thunder of the tempest into which Christ plunged for our rescue!

Come in on that one narrow beam, the beam of the cross. Let all else go and cling to that. Put that under you, and with the earnestness of a swimmer struggling for his life put out for shore. There is a great warm fire of welcome already built, and already many who were as far out as you are, are standing in its genial and heavenly glow. The angels of God's rescue are wading out into the surf to clutch your hand, and they know how exhausted you are, and all the redeemed prodigals of heaven are on the beach with new white robes to clothe all those who come in on broken pieces of the ship. My sympathies are for such all the more because I was naturally skeptical, disposed to question everything about this life and the next, and was in danger of being further out to sea than any of the two hundred and seventy-six in the Mediterranean breakers, and I was sometimes the annoyance of my theological professor because I asked so many questions. But I came in on a plank. I knew Christ was the Saviour of sinners, and that I was a sinner, and I got ashore, and I do not propose to go out on that sea again. I have not for thirty minutes discussed the controverted points of theology in thirty years. And during the rest of my life I do not propose to discuss them for thirty seconds.

I would rather in a mud-scow try to weather the worst cyclone that ever swept up from the Caribbean than risk my immortal soul in useless and perilous discussion in which some of my brethren in the ministry are indulging. They remind me of a company of sailors standing on Ramsgate



U. S. LIFE SAVING STATION.

pierhead, from which the life-boats are usually launched, and coolly discussing the different style of oar-locks and how deep a boat ought to set in the water, while a hurricane is in full blast, and there are three steamers crowded with passengers going to pieces in the offing. An old tar, the muscles of his face working with nervous excitement, cries out: "This is no time to discuss such things. Man the life-boat! Who will volunteer? Out with her into the serf! Pull, my lads, pull for the wreck! Ha! ha! Now we have them. Lift them in and lay them down on the bottom of the boat. Jack, you try to bring them to. Put these flannels around their hands and feet, and I will pull for the shore. God help me! There! Landed! Huzza!" When there are so many struggling in the waves of sin and sorrow and wretchedness, let all else go but salvation for time and salvation forever.

I bethink myself that there are some whose opportunity or whose life is a mere wreck, and they have only a small piece left. You started in youth with all sails set and everything promising a grand voyage, but you have sailed in the wrong direction or have foundered on a rock. You have only a fragment of time left. Then come in on that one plank. You admit that you are all broken up, one decade of your life gone by, two decades, three decades, four decades, a half century, perhaps three-quarters of a century gone. The hour-hand and the minute-hand of your clock of life are almost parallel, and soon it will be twelve and your day ended. Clear discouraged, are you? I admit it is a sad thing to give all of our lives that are worth anything to sin and the devil, and then at last make God a present of a first-rate corpse. But the past you cannot recover. Get on board that old ship you never will. Have you only one more year left, one more month, one more week, one more day, one more hour—come in on that. Perhaps if you get to heaven God may let you go out on some great mission to some other world, where you can somewhat atone for your lack of service in this.

From many a deathbed I have seen the hands thrown up in deploration something like this: "My life has been wasted. I had good mental faculties, and fine social position, and great opportunity, but through worldliness and neglect all has gone to waste, save these few remaining hours. I now accept of Christ, and shall enter heaven through his mercy; but alas! alas! that when I might have entered the haven of eternal rest with a full cargo, and been greeted by the waving hands of a multitude in whose salvation I had borne a blessed part, I must confess I now enter the harbor of heaven on broken pieces of the ship!"

CHAPTER XLIV.

WRECKED FOR TWO WORLDS.

Ministers of religion may finally be lost. The Apostle indicates that possibility. Gown and surplice and cardinal's red hat are no security. Cardinal Woolsey, after having been petted by kings and having entertained foreign ambassadors at Hampton Court, died in darkness. One of the most eminent ministers of religion that this country has ever known plunged into sin and died, his heart, in post mortem examination, found to have been, not figuratively, but literally, broken. O, ministers of Christ, because we have diplomas of graduation, and hands of ordination on the head, and address consecrated assemblages, that is no reason why we shall necessarily reach the realm celestial. The clergyman must go through the same gate of pardon as the layman. The preacher may get his audience into heaven, and he himself miss it. There have been cases of shipwreck where all on board escaped excepting the captain. Alas! if, having "preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." God forbid it.

I have examined some of the commentaries to see what they thought about this word "castaway," and I find that they differ in regard to the figure used, while they agree in regard to the meaning. So I shall make my own selection, and take it in a nautical and seafaring sense, and show you that men may become spiritual castaways, and how finally they drift into that calamity. You have all stood on the beach of a seaboard town. Many of you have crossed the ocean. Some of you have managed vessels in great stress of weather.

There is a sea-captain! and there is another, and yonder is another, and there are a goodly number of you who, though once you did not know the difference between a brig and a bark, and between a diamond knot and a sprit-sheet-sail knot, and although you could not point out the weather-cross jack brace, and though you could not man the fore clue-garnets, now you are as familiar with a ship as you are with your right hand, and if it were necessary you could take a vessel clear across to the mouth of the Mersey without the loss of a single sail. Well, there is a dark night in your memory of the sea. The vessel became unmanageable. You saw it was scudding toward the shore. You heard the cry: "Breakers ahead! Land on the lee bow!" The vessel struck the rock, and you felt the deck breaking up under your feet, and you were a castaway, as when the Hercules drove on the coast of Caffraria, as when the Portuguese brig went staving, splitting, grinding, crashing on the Goodwins. But whether you have followed the sea or not, you all understand the figure when I tell you that there are men who by their sins and temptations are thrown helpless! Driven before the gale! Wrecked for two worlds! Castaway! castaway!

By talking with some sailors, I have found out that there are three or four causes for such a calamity to a vessel. I have been told that it sometimes comes from creating false lights on the beach. This was often so in olden times. It is not many years ago indeed that vagabonds used to wander up and down the beach, getting vessels ashore in the night, throwing up false lights in their presence and deceiving them, that they might despoil and ransack them. All kinds of infernal arts were used to accomplish this. And one night, on the Cornish coast, when the sea was coming in fearfully, some villains took a lantern and tied it to a horse, and led the horse up and down the beach, the lantern swaying to the motion of the horse, and a sea captain in the offing saw it, and made up his mind that he was not anywhere near the shore, for he said, "There's a vessel—that must be a vessel, for it has a movable light," and he had no apprehension until he heard the rocks grating on the ship's bottom, and it went to pieces, and the villains on shore gathered up the packages and the treasures that were washed to the land. And I have to tell you that there are a multitude of souls ruined by false lights on the beach. In the dark night of man's danger, Universalism goes up and down the shore, shaking its lantern, and men look off and take that flickering and expiring wick as the signal of safety, and the cry is, "Heave the main topsail to the mast! All is well!" when sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. So there are all kinds of lanterns swung on the beach—philosophical lanterns, educational lanterns, humanitarian lanterns. Men look at them, and are deceived, when there is nothing but God's eternal light-house of the Gospel that can keep them from becoming castaways.

Once, on Wolf Crag light-house, they tried to build a copper figure of a wolf with its mouth open, so that the storms beating into it, the wolf would howl forth the danger to mariners that might be coming anywhere near the coast. Of course it was a failure. And so all new inventions for the saving of man's soul are unavailing. What the human race wants is a light bursting forth from the cross standing on the great head-lands—the light of pardon, the light of comfort, the light of heaven. You might better go to-night. and destroy all the great light-house on the dangerous coasts—the Barnegat light-house, the Fastnet Rock light-house, the Sherryvore light-house, the Longship's light-house, the Hollyhead light-house—than to put out God's great ocean lamp—the Gospel. Woe to those who swing false lanterns on the beach till men crash in and perish. Castaway! castaway!

By talking with sailors I have heard also, that sometimes ships come to this calamity by the sudden swoop of a tempest.

For instance, a vessel is sailing along in the East Indies, and there is not a single cloud on the sky; but suddenly the breeze freshens, and there are swift feet on the ratlines, and the cry is: "'Way, haul away there!" but before they can square the booms and tarpaulin the hatchways, the vessel is groaning and creaking in the grip of a tornado, and falls over into the trough of the sea, and broadside rolls on to the beach and keels over, leaving the crew to struggle in the merciless surf. Castaway! castaway! And so I have to tell you that there are thousands of men destroyed through the sudden swoop of temptations. Some great inducement to worldliness, or to sensuality, or to high temper, or to some form of dissipation, comes upon them. If they had time to examine their Bible, if they had time to consult with their friends, if they had time to deliberate, they could stand it; but the temptation came so suddenly—a euroclydon on the Mediterranean, a whirlwind of the Carribean. One awful surge of temptation, and they perish. And so we often hear the old story, "I hadn't seen my friend in a great many years. We were very glad to meet. He said I must drink, and he took me by the arm and pressed me along, and filled the cup until the bubbles ran over the edge, and in an evil moment all my good resolutions were swept away, and to the outraging of God and my own soul, I fell." Or the story is, "I had hard work to support my family. I knew that by one false entry, by one deception, by one embezzlement, I might spring out free from all my trouble; but the temptation came upon me so fiercely I could not think. I did wrong, and having done wrong once, I could not stop." O, it is the first step that costs; the second is easier, and the third; and on to the last. Once having broken loose from the anchor, it is not so easy to tie the parted strands. How often it is that men perish for the reason that the temptation comes from some unexpected quarter. As vessels lie in Margate Roads, safe from southwest winds; but the wind changing to the northeast, they are driven helpless and go down. O, that God would have mercy upon those upon whom there comes the sudden swoop of temptation, that they perish not, becoming for this world and the world to come, cast away! cast away!

By talking with sailors I have found out also that some vessels come to this calamity through sheer recklessness. There are three million men who follow the sea for a living. It is a simple fact that the average of human life on the sea is less than twelve years. This comes from the fact that men by familiarity with danger sometimes become reckless—the captain, the helmsman, the stoker, the man on the look-out become reckless, and in nine out of ten shipwrecks it is found out that some one was awfully to blame. So I have to tell you that men lose their souls through sheer recklessness. There are thousands of my friends in this house to-night who do not care where they are in spiritual things. They do not know whether they are sailing toward heaven or toward hell, and the sea is black with piratical hulks that would grapple them with hooks of steel, and blindfold them, and make them "walk the plank." They do not know what the next moment may bring forth. Drifting in their theology. Drifting in their habits. Drifting in regard to all the future. No God, no Christ, no settled anticipations of eternal felicity; but all the time coming nearer and nearer to a dangerous coast. Some of them are on fire with evil habit, and they shall burn on the sea, the charred hulk tossed up on the barren beach of the lost world. Many of them with great troubles, financial troubles, domestic troubles, social troubles; but they never pray for comfort. With an aggravation of sin that stirs up the ire of God they pray for no pardon.

They do not steer for the light ship that dances in gladness at the mouth of Heaven's harbor; reckless as to where they come out, drifting further from God, further from early religious influences, further from their present happiness, further from heaven; and what is the worst thing about it is that they are taking their families along with them, and if one perish, perhaps they will all perish, and the way one goes, the probability is they will all go. Yet no anxiety. As unconscious of danger as the passengers on board the Arctic one moment before the Vesta crashed into her. Wrapped up in the business of the store, not remembering that soon they must quit all their earthly possessions. Absorbed in their social position, not knowing that very soon they will have attended the last *levée*, and whirled in the last *schottische.* They do not deliberately choose to be ruined; neither did the French frigate Medusa aim for the Arguin Banks, but there it went to pieces. O ye reckless souls! I wish that to-night I could wake you up with some great perturbation.

The perils are so augmented, the chances of escape are so few; you will die just as certainly as you sit there, unless you bestir yourself. I fear, my brother, you are becoming a castaway. You are making no effort, you are putting forth no exertion for escape. You throw out no oar. You take no soundings. You watch no compass. You are not calculating your bearings while the wind is abaft, and yonder is a long line of foam bounding the horizon, and you will be pushed on toward it, and thousands have perished there, and you are driving in the same direction. Ready about! Down helm! Hard down! or in the next five minutes or four minutes or three minutes or two minutes or one minute you may be a castaway. O, unforgiven soul, if you could see your peril before God to-night, on account of your lifetime sin and transgression, there would be fifty men who would rush through this aisle crying for mercy, and there would be fifty who would rush through that aisle crying for mercy, they would be as men are when they rush across the deck of a foundering ship, and there would be thousands of arms tossed up from the galleries; and as these Christian men rose up to help them, it would be as when a vessel drives on the rocks, and on the shore the command is: "Man the lifeboat! Man the lifeboat! Pull, my lads, pull! A steamer with two hundred on board making the last plunge!"

Why does your cheek turn pale, and your heart pound until, listening, you hear it? It is because, my dear brother, you realize that because of your lifetime sin and rejection of God's mercy you are in peril, and I really believe there are thousands of people this moment, saying within themselves: "What shall I do?" Do? Do? Why, my brother, do what any ship does when it is in trouble. Lift a distress signal. There is a flash and a boom. You listen and you look. A vessel is in trouble. The distress gun is sounded, or a rocket is sent up, or a blanket is lifted, or a bundle of rags—anything to catch the eye of the passing craft. So, if you want to be taken off the wreck of your sin, you must lift a distress signal. Rise. Lift your hand. Cry out for mercy. The publican lifted the distress signal when he cried: "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" Peter lifted the distress signal when he said: "Lord, save me, I perish!" The blind man lifted the distress signal when he said: "Lord, that my eyes may be opened." The jailer lifted the distress signal when he said: "What must I do to be saved?" And help will never come to your soul until you lift such a signal as that. You must make some demonstration, give some sign, make some heaven-piercing outcry for help, lifting the distress signal for the Church's prayer, lifting the distress signal for Heaven's pardon. Pray! Pray! The voice of the Lord to-night sounds in your ears: "In Me is thy help." Too proud to raise such a signal, too proud to be saved.

There was an old sailor thumping about in a small boat in a tempest. The larger vessel had gone down. He felt he must die. The surf was breaking over the boat, and he said: "I took off my life-belt that it might soon be over, and I thought somewhat indistinctly about my friends on shore, and then I bid them good-bye like, and I was about sinking back and giving it up, when I saw a bright star. The clouds were breaking away, and there that blessed star shone down on me, and it seemed to take right hold of me; and somehow, I cannot tell how it was, but somehow, while I was trying to watch that star, it seemed to help me and seemed to lift me." O, drowning soul, see you not the glimmer between the rifts of the storm-cloud? Would to God that that light might lay hold of you to-night.

O, ye castaways, God is doing everything to save you. Did you ever hear of Lionel Luken? He was the inventor of the insubmergible life-boat. All honor is due his memory by seafaring men, as well as by landsmen. How many lives he saved by his invention. In after days that invention was improved, and one day there was a perfect lifeboat, the Northumberland, ready at Ramsgate. The lifeboat being ready, to test it the crew came out and leaped on the gunwale, on one side, to see if the boat would upset; it was impossible to upset it. Then, amid the huzzas of excited thousands, that boat was launched, and it has gone and come, picking up a great many of the shipwrecked. But I have to tell you to-night of a grander launching, and from the dry-docks of heaven. Word came up that a world was beating on the rocks. In the presence of the potentates of heaven the lifeboat of the world's redemption was launched. It shoved off the golden sands amid angelic hosanna. The surges of darkness beat against its bow, but it sailed on, and it comes in sight to-night. It comes for you, it comes for me. Soul! soul! get into it. Make one leap for heaven. This is your last chance for life. Let that boat go past and there remains nothing but fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary.

In 1833 the Isabella came ashore off Hastings, England. The air was filled with sounds—the hoarse sea-trumpet, the crash of the axes, and the bellowing of the tornado. A boat from the shore came under the stern of the disabled vessel. There were women and children on board that vessel. Some of the sailors jumped into the small boat and said: "Now give us the children." A father who stood on deck took his first-born and threw him to the boat. The sailors caught him safely, and the next, and the next, to the last. Still the sea rocking, the storm howling. "Now," said the sailors, "now the mother;" and she leaped and was saved. The boat went to the shore; but before it got to the shore the landsmen were so impatient to help the suffering people that they waded clear down into the surf, with blankets and garments and promises of help and succor. I have to hope to-night that a great many of the families here are going to be saved, and saved all together. Give us that child for Christ, that other child, that other. Give us the mother, give us the father, the whole family. They must all come in. All heaven wades in to help you. I claim all of you for good. I pick not out one man here nor one man there; I claim all for God. There are some of you who, thirty years ago, were consecrated to Christ by your parents in baptism. Certainly I am not stepping over the right bound when I claim you for Jesus. Then there are many here who have been seeking God for a good while, and am I not right in claiming you for Jesus? Then there are some here who have been further away. I saw you come in to-night in clusters—two, three, and four men together—and you drink, and you swear, and you are bringing up your families without any God to take care of them when you are dead. And I claim you, my brother; I claim all of you. You will have to come to-night to the throne of mercy. God's Holy Spirit is striving now with you irresistibly. Although there may be a smile on your lip, there is agitation and anxiety in your heart. You will not come at my invitation; you will come at God's command.

[At this point in Mr. Talmage's remarks, one of the windows in the rear part of the church was slammed down by some thoughtless person. The noise alarmed many in the vast congregation, and they made a rush for the doors. This had the effect of alarming others. and in a moment six thousand people were up on their feet. Mr. Talmage cried to them to "sit down." The President of the Board of Trustees ascertained the cause of the noise and immediately informed Mr. Talmage, who announced it, and succeeded in bringing the people to order again. That part of the congregation who had wisely kept their seats were singing the doxology during the uproar. Nearly all of those who had left the building returned when they learned the cause of their fright, and Mr. Talmage continued as follows:]

What! are you so afraid when there is no danger at all? Will the slamming shut of a window startle six thousand souls? Would God that you were as cautious about eternal perils as you are about the perils of time. If that slight noise sends you to your feet, what will you do when the thunders of the last day roll through earth and sky, and the mountains come down in avalanche of rock? You cry out for the safety of your body; why not cry out for the safety of your soul? You will have to pray some time; why not begin now, while all the ripe and purple clusters of divine promise bend over into your cup, rather than postpone your prayer until your chance is past, and the night drops, and the sea washes you out, and forever and forever and forever you become a castaway?

CHAPTER XLV.

SOLD OUT FOR ETERNITY.

The Jews had gone headlong into sin, and as a punishment they had been carried captive to Babylon. They found that iniquity did not pay. Cyrus seized Babylon, and felt so sorry for these poor captive Jews that, without a dollar of compensation, he let them go home. So that literally these words were fulfilled: "Ye have sold ourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." There are many persons who have, like these Jews, sold out. They do not seem to belong either to themselves or to God. The title deeds have been passed over to "the world, the flesh and the devil;" but the purchaser has never paid up. "They have sold themselves for nought."

When a man passes himself over to the world he expects to get some adequate compensation. He has heard the great things that the world does for a man, and he believes it. He wants two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. That will be horses and houses and a summer resort and jolly companionship. To get it, he parts with his physical health by overwork. He parts with his conscience. He parts with much domestic enjoyment. He parts with opportunities for literary culture. He parts with his soul. And so he makes over his entire nature to the world. He does it in four instalments. He pays down the first instalment, and one-fourth of his nature is gone. He pays down the second instalment, and one-half of his nature is gone. He pays down the third instalment, and three-quarters of his nature is gone; and after many years have gone by he pays down the fourth instalment, and, lo! his entire nature is gone. Then he comes up to the world and says: "Good morning. I have delivered to you the goods. I have passed over to you my body, my mind, and my soul, and I have come now to collect the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars." "Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars?" says the world. "What do you mean?" "Well," you say, "I come to collect the money you owe me, and I expect you now to fulfil your part of the contract." "But," says the world, "I have failed. I am bankrupt. I cannot possibly pay that debt. I have not for a long while expected to pay it." "Well," you then say, "give me back the goods. "O, no," says the world, "they are all gone. I cannot give them back to you." And there you stand on the confines of eternity, your spiritual character gone, staggering under the consideration that "you have sold yourself for nought."

I tell you the world is a liar; it does not keep its promises. It is a cheat, and it fleeces everything it can put its hands on. It is a bogus world. It is a six-thousand-year-old swindle. Even if it pays the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for which you contracted, it pays them in bonds that will not be worth anything in a little while. Just as a man may pay down ten thousand dollars in hard cash and get for it worthless scrip, so the world passes over to you the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in that shape which will not be worth a farthing to you a thousandth part of a second after you are dead. "O," you say, "it will help to bury me anyhow." O, my brother, you need not worry about that. The world will bury you soon enough, from sanitary considerations. After you have been deceased for three or four days you will compel the world to bury you. *Post mortem* emoluments are of no use to you. The treasures of this world will not pass current in the future world; and if all the wealth of the Bank of England were put in the pocket of your shroud, and you in the midst of the Jordan of death were asked to pay three cents for your ferriage, you could not do it. There comes a moment in your existence beyond which all earthly values fail; and many a man has wakened up in such a time to find that he has sold out for eternity, and has nothing to show for it. I should as soon think of going to Chatham street to buy silk pocket handkerchiefs with no cotton in them, as to go to this world expecting to find any permanent happiness. It has deceived and deluded every man that ever put his trust in it. History tells us of one who resolved that he would have all his senses gratified at one and the same time, and he expended hundreds of pounds on each sense. He entered a room, and there were the first musicians of the land pleasing his ear, and there were fine pictures fascinating his eye, and there were costly aromatics regaling the nostril, and there were the richest meats and wines and fruits and confections pleasing the appetite, and there was a soft couch of sinful indulgence on which he reclined; and the man declared afterward that he would give ten times what he had given if he could have one week of such enjoyment, even though he lost his soul by it. Ah! that was the rub. He did lose his soul by it! Cyrus the conqueror thought for a little while that he was making a fine thing out of this world, and yet before he came to his grave he wrote out this pitiful epitaph for his monument: "I am Cyrus. I occupied the Persian Empire. I was king over Asia. Begrudge me not this monument." But the world in after years ploughed up his sepulcher.

The world clapped its hands and stamped its feet in honor of Charles Lamb; but what does he say? "I walk up and down, thinking I am happy, but feeling I am not." Call the roll, and be quick about it. Samuel Johnson, the learned! Happy? "No. I am afraid I shall some day get crazy." William Hazlitt, the great essayist! Happy? "No. I have been for two hours and a half going up and down Paternoster Row with a volcano in my breast." Smollet, the witty author! Happy? "No. I am sick of praise and blame, and I wish to God that I had such circumstances around me that I could throw my pen into oblivion." Buchanan, the world-renowned writer, exiled from his own country, appealing to Henry VIII. for protection! Happy? "No. Over mountains covered with snow, and through valleys flooded with rain, I come a fugitive." Moliere, the popular dramatic author! Happy? "No. That wretch of an actor just now recited four of my lines without the proper accent and gesture. To have the children of my brain so hung, drawn and quartered tortures me like a condemned spirit."

I went to see a worldling die. As I went into the hall I saw its floor was tesselated, and its wall was a picture gallery. I found his death-chamber adorned with tapestry until it seemed as if the clouds of the setting sun had settled in the room. That man had given forty years to the world,—his wit, his time, his genius, his talent, his soul. Did the world come in to stand by his death-bed, and clearing off the phials of bitter medicine, put down any compensation? Oh, no! The world does not like sick and dying people, and leaves them in the lurch. It ruined this man and then left him. He had a magnificent funeral. All the ministers wore scarfs, and there were forty-three carriages in a row; but the departed man appreciated not the obsequies.

I want to persuade my readers that this world is a poor investment; that it does not pay ninety per cent of satisfaction, nor eighty per cent, nor twenty per cent, nor two per cent, nor one; that it gives no solace when a dead babe lies on your lap; that it gives no peace when conscience rings its alarm; that it gives no explanation in the day of dire trouble; and at the time of your decease it takes hold of the pillow-case and shakes out the feathers, and then jolts down in the place thereof sighs and groans and execrations, and then makes you put your head on it. O, ye who have tried this world, is it a satisfactory portion? Would you advise your friends to make the investment? No. "Ye have sold yourselves for nought." Your conscience went. Your hope went. Your Bible went. Your heaven went. Your God went. When a sheriff under a writ from the court sells a man out, the officer generally leaves a few chairs and a bed, and a few cups and knives; but in this awful vendue in which you have been engaged, the auctioneer's mallet has come down upon body, mind and soul: Going! Gone! "Ye have sold yourselves for nought." How could you do so? Did you think that your soul was a mere trinket which for a few pennies you could buy in a toy shop? Did you think that your soul, if once lost, might be found again if you went out with torches and lanterns? Did you think that your soul was short-lived, and that, panting, it would soon lie down for extinction? Or had you no idea what your soul was worth? Did you ever put your forefinger on its eternal pulses? Have you never felt the quiver of its peerless wing? Have you not known that, after leaving the body, the first step of your soul reaches to the stars, and the next step to the farthest outposts of God's universe; and that it will not die until in the day when the everlasting Jehovah expires? O, my brother, what possessed you that you should part with your soul so cheap, "Ye have sold yourselves for nought."

But I have some good news to tell you. I want to engage in a litigation for the recovery of that soul of yours. I want to show you that you have been cheated out of it. I want to prove, as I will, that you were crazy on that subject, and that the world, under such circumstances, had no right to take the title deed from you; and, if you will join me, I shall get a decree from the High Chancery Court of Heaven, reinstating you into the possession of your soul. "Oh," you say, "I am afraid of lawsuits; they are so expensive, and I cannot pay the cost."

Then have you forgotten the last half of the sentence, "Ye shall be redeemed without money"? Money is good for a great many things, but it cannot do anything in this matter of the soul. You cannot buy your way through. Dollars and pounds sterling mean nothing at the gate of mercy. If you could buy your salvation, heaven would be a great speculation,—an extension of Wall street. Bad men would go up and buy out the place, and leave us to shift for ourselves. But as money is not a lawful tender, what is it? I will answer: Blood! Whose? Are we to go through the slaughter? Oh, no; it wants richer blood than ours. It wants a King's blood. It must be poured from royal arteries. It must be a sinless torrent. But where is the King? I see a great many thrones and a great many occupants, yet none seem to be coming down to the rescue. But after awhile the clock of night in Bethlehem strikes midnight, and the silver pendulum of a star swings across the sky, and I see the King of Heaven rising up, and He descends and steps down from star to star and from cloud to cloud, lower and lower until He touches the sheep-covered hills, and then on to another hill, this last skull-covered, and there, at the sharp stroke of persecution, a rill incarnadine trickles down, and we who could not be redeemed by money are redeemed by precious and imperial blood.

We have in this day professed Christians who are so rarefied and etherialized that they do not want a religion of blood. What do they want? They seem to want a religion of brain. The Bible says: "In the blood is the life." No atonement without blood. Ought not the apostle to know? What did he say? "Ye are redeemed not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold; but by the precious blood of Christ." You put your lancet into the arm of our holy religion and withdraw the blood, and you leave it a mere corpse, fit only for the grave. Why did God command the priests of old to strike the knife into the kid and the goat and the pigeon and he bullock and the lamb? It was so that when the blood rushed out from these animals on the floor of the ancient tabernacle, the people should be compelled to think of the coming carnage of the Son of God. No blood, no atonement. I think that God intended to impress us with the vividness of that color. The green of the grass, the blue of the sky, would not have startled and aroused us like this deep crimson. It is as if God had said: "Now, sinner, wake up and see what the Saviour endured for you. This is not water. This is not wine. It is blood. It is the blood of my own Son. It is the blood of the Immaculate. It is the blood of a God." Without the shedding of blood is no remission. There has been many a man who in courts of law has plead "not guilty," who nevertheless has been condemned, because there was blood found on his hands, or blood found in his room; and what shall we do on the last day if it be found that we have re-crucified the Lord of Glory and have never repented of it? You must believe in the blood or die. No escape. Unless you let the sacrifice of Jesus Christ go in your stead, you yourself must suffer. It is either Christ's blood or your blood.

"Oh," says some one, "the thought of blood sickens me." Good. God intended it to sicken you with your sin. Do not act as though you had nothing to do with the Calvarean massacre. You had. Your sins were the implements of torture. Those implements were not made out of steel and iron and wood so much as out of your sins. Guilty of this homicide and this regicide and this deicide, confess your guilt. Ten thousand voices of heaven bring in the verdict against you of guilty, guilty. Prepare to die or believe in that blood. Stretch yourself out for the sacrifice, or accept the Saviour's sacrifice. Do not fling away your one chance. It seems to me as if all heaven were trying to bid in your soul. The first bid it makes is the tears of Christ at the tomb of Lazarus; but that is not a high enough price. The next bid heaven makes is the sweat of Gethsemane; but it is too cheap a price. The next bid heaven makes seems to be the whipped back of Pilate's hall; but it is not a high enough price. Can it be possible that heaven cannot buy you in? Heaven tries once more. It says: "I bid this time for that man's soul the tortures of Christ's martyrdom, the blood on His temple, the blood on His cheek, the blood on His chin, the blood on His hand, the blood on His side, the blood on His knee, the blood on His foot; the blood in drops, the blood in rills, the blood in pools coagulated beneath the cross; the blood that wet the tips of the soldiers' spears; the blood that splashed warm in the faces of His enemies." Glory to God, that bid wins it! The highest price that was ever paid for anything was paid for your soul. Nothing could buy it but blood! The estranged property is bought back. Take it. "Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." Oh, atoning blood, cleansing blood, life-giving blood, sanctifying blood, glorifying blood of Jesus! Why not burst into tears at the thought that for thee He shed it? For thee the hard-hearted, for thee the lost.

"No," says some one, "I will have nothing to do with it except that, like the Jews, I put both my hands into that carnage and scoop up both palms full and then throw it on my head and cry: 'His blood be on us and on our children!'" Can you do such a shocking thing as that? Just rub your handkerchief across your brow and look at it. It is the blood of the Son of God whom you have despised and driven back all these years. Oh, do not do that any longer. Come out frankly and boldly and honestly and tell Christ you are sorry. You cannot afford to so roughly treat Him upon whom everything depends. I do not know how you will get away from this subject. You see that you are sold out and that Christ wants to buy you back. There are three persons who come after you: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. They unite their three omnipotences in one movement for your salvation. You will not take up arms against the Triune God, will you? Is there enough muscle in your arm for such a combat? By the highest throne in heaven and by the deepest chasm in hell, I beg you to look out. Unless you allow Christ to carry away your sins, they will carry you away. Unless you allow Christ to lift you up, they will drag you down. There is only one hope for you, and that is the blood. Christ, the sin-offering, bearing your transgressions. Christ, the surety, paying your debts. Christ, the divine Cyrus, loosening your Babylonish captivity. Would you like to be free? Here is the price of your liberation—not money, but blood. I tremble from head to foot, because I fear that you will miss your chance for immortal rescue, and die. This is the alternative, divinely put: "He that believeth on the Son, shall have everlasting life, and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." In the last day, if you now reject Christ, every drop of that sacrificial blood, instead of pleading for your release, as it would have plead if you had repented, will plead against you. It will seem to say: "They refused the ransom; they chose to die; let them die; they must die. Down with them to the weeping and the wailing. Depart, go away from me. You would not have me, now I will not have you. Sold out for eternity."

O Lord God of the judgment day, avert that calamity! Let us see the quick flash of the scimitar that slays the sin, but saves the sinner. Strike! Omnipotent God, for the soul's deliverance! Beat, O eternal sea, with all thy waves, against the barren beach of that rocky soul, and make it tremble! Oh! oppressiveness of the hour, the minute, the second, on which the soul's destiny quivers, and the present is that hour, that minute, that second! I wonder what proportion of this world will be saved? What proportion will be lost?

Some years ago there came down a fierce storm on the sea coast, and a vessel got in the breakers and was going to pieces. They threw up some signal of distress, and the people on the shore saw them. They put out in a life-boat. They came on, and they saw the poor sailors, almost exhausted, clinging to a raft; and so afraid were the boatmen that the men would give up before they got to them, that they gave them three rounds of rousing cheers and cried: "Hold on there! Hold on! We'll save you!" After awhile the boat came up. One man was saved by having the boat-hook put in the collar of his coat; and some in one way and some in another; but they all got into the boat. "Now," says the captain, "for the shore. Pull away now! pull!" The people on the land were afraid the life-boat had gone down. They said: "How long the boat stays. Why, it must have been swamped, and they have all perished together." And there were men and women on the pier-heads and on the beach. wringing their hands; and while they waited and watched, they saw something looming up through the mist, and it turned out to be the life-boat. As soon as it came within speaking distance the people on the shore cried out: "Did you save any of them? Did you save any of them?" And as the boat swept through the boiling surf and came to the pier-head, the captain waved his hand over the exhausted sailors that lay flat on the bottom of the boat and cried: "All saved! Thank God! All saved!" So may it be with you. The waves of sin run high, the storm is on you, the danger is appalling. O shipwrecked soul, I have come for you. I cheer you with this Gospel hope. God grant that we may row with you into the harbor of God's mercy. And when Christian men gather around to see the result, and the glorified gather on the pier-heads of heaven to watch and to listen, may we be able to report all saved! Young and old, good and bad! All saved! Saved from sin and death and hell. Saved for time. Saved for eternity.